# THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
# WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

WITH ANNOTATIONS AND
A GENERAL INTRODUCTION
BY SIDNEY LEE

VOLUME XIV

## ROMEO AND JULIET

WITH A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION BY J. CHURTON COLLINS
AND AN ORIGINAL FRONTISPIECE BY FRANK DICKSEE

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# INTRODUCTION

TO the student of Shakespeare few plays have so many points of interest as "Romeo and Juliet." In the first place, it marks with singular precision the connection between the poems and the plays and enables us more exactly than any other of his extant dramas to see and understand how Shakespeare's work as a playwright and dramatist grew out of his work as a pure poet. In the second place, we are enabled more fully and with less ambiguity than is the case with anything else he has left us to trace the development of the play itself from immaturity to its final form; with the Quartos of 1597 and 1599 in our hands we are indeed admitted into the poet's workshop. In the third place, the history of its text, even after the revision of 1599, is full of instruction

on a subject of deep interest to others than mere technical critics. In the fourth place, the history of the legend on which the plot is founded — its sources, its variants, its modifications, both at the hands of the writer whom Shakespeare appears directly to have followed, and at the hands of Shakespeare himself — is full of curious interest. And lastly, the drama itself, one of the poet's most elaborately finished masterpieces, has, and always must have, whether it be approached critically or uncritically, extraordinary fascination.

One of the most interesting and important branches of Shakespearean inquiry — the process, namely, of the evolution of his genius and art — is unfortunately beset with an insuperable initial difficulty. We have no means of knowing when he began the composition either of his poems or of his plays. Till the spring of 1592 we have no record of anything produced by him; probability alone can be our guide. He calls "Venus and Adonis," published in 1593, "the first heir of my invention"; but it is certain that at and before that date he had been engaged in dramatic composition. If the points of resemblance between "Venus and Adonis" and Lodge's "Scillas Metamorphosis," and those between "The Rape of Lucrece" and Daniel's "Complaint of Rosamund," were, as seems highly probable, the results of imitations of these poems, the first poem could not have been written before 1589 or the second before 1592, unless, as is not likely, these poems had been circulated in manuscript and to those manuscripts Shakespeare had had access. Everything seems

to indicate that in all his earlier works Shakespeare was careful to follow the fashion, and to follow it with servile fidelity and timid deference, and that, so far as form, tone, colour, and style generally were concerned, he initiated nothing. It is of course conceivable that both "Venus and Adonis" and "The Rape of Lucrece" may have been written, or at least that the first draughts of them may have been written, some time before their supposed models appeared, and that Shakespeare brought them up with him from Stratford as early, perhaps, as 1586 or 1587. But this is pressing conjecture unduly, and is not very likely. The probability is that "Venus and Adonis" was suggested by Lodge's poem, and written perhaps in the same year as its model appeared. At all events, what seems in the highest degree probable is this, that before Shakespeare left Stratford for London he had commenced poetry, and that what chiefly occupied him was erotic poetry, a specimen of which we have in "A Lover's Complaint." What seems certain is, that in his early days in London, before he became absorbed in his work for the stage, he was principally occupied in writing erotic poetry, then immensely in vogue. With that poetry his poems and sonnets show that he was extraordinarily familiar, and to contribute to that poetry was evidently at first his chief ambition. Of all his poems, with a few trifling exceptions, love is the theme. In "Venus and Adonis" he depicted the tyranny of passion in woman, in "The Rape of Lucrece" the tyranny of passion in man. In the sonnets, the majority of which probably belong to

this period, love in its nobler and love in its baser aspects is depicted and contrasted. How far these poems, the sonnets particularly, are subjective and indebted to lyrical inspiration, or how far they are merely dramatic creations, pure fictions of impassioned imagination, it is idle to inquire. The balance of probability is in favour of the latter hypothesis, and "Romeo and Juliet" may, I venture to think, be cited as turning the scale. Shakespeare's genius was essentially dramatic and objective; he belongs to that type of artists whom Aristotle calls εὐφυεῖς as distinguished from μανικοὶ.

In employing passion-suffused narrative poetry and the sonnet for its expression he had forced it into forms at once inappropriate and misleading, because of their association not with what is objective and dramatic, but with what is subjective and lyrical. In the drama, on the other hand, it found its proper mould, its strictly appropriate mode of expression.

With what singular preciseness "Romeo and Juliet" marks the transition of the work of the poet into the work of the dramatist cannot fail to strike any one. Its theme, like the theme of the poems, is passion, and as in the poems, that passion is treated rhetorically and lyrically. Its colour has the colour of the poems; it has throughout the same highly ornate and rich diction, a diction much more appropriate for the lyric or the sonnet than for drama, abounding in passages of which the following are typical:

"This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet" (II, ii).

"O, so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint" (II, vi).

"Come, thou day in night;
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back" (III, ii).

"Thou art not conquer'd; beauty's ensign yet
Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
And death's pale flag is not advanced there" (V, iii).

And this characteristic it has in common both with "Love's Labour 's Lost" and with "The Midsummer Night's Dream," plays also typical of the same stage in the poet's career. An even nearer approximation to the poems is found in the forms of expressions employed in the drama. To say nothing of the large percentage of rhymed couplets and the frequent introduction of double rhymes, we have three sonnets, — first the prologue, next the dialogue between Romeo and Juliet in the fifth scene of the first act, then the chorus at the end of the first act. Again, the stanza in which "Venus and Adonis" is written is employed three times, — in Benvolio's opening speech to Romeo (I, ii, 46–51), in Romeo's reply to Benvolio (*id.*, 93–97), and in the lines which conclude the play.

True of course it is that we have no means of ascertaining with certainty whether the poems, either or any of them, preceded "Romeo and Juliet," or whether "Romeo and Juliet" preceded the poems. But here,

as in almost everything concerning Shakespeare, probability must be our guide. We have no evidence of the existence of the drama before the notification in the First Quarto of 1597 that it had "been often with great applause plaid publiquely by the right Honourable, the L. of Hunsdon his Serveaunts." But in the nurse's speech (I, iii, 23) we find the line "'T is since the earthquake now eleven years," which undoubtedly refers to the shock of the earthquake felt in London in April, 1580, of which we have vivid accounts both in Holinshed and in Stowe. In this topical allusion, directly appealing to the experience of his audience, — and such allusions, however anachronistic in relation to their context, are very common in Shakespeare and in the Elizabethan dramatists, — the poet was in all probability making a statement which was to be taken literally; if so, that would fix the appearance of the play in or about 1591. We have, therefore, evidence not merely intrinsic for supposing that "Romeo and Juliet" grew, so to speak, directly out of his work as a poet and is the most interesting and important of all the links between the poems and the plays.

We come now to the problem presented by the Quartos, which, if the obvious solution be the correct one, enables us to see how the play grew up under his hand. The First Quarto of 1597 was printed anonymously and surreptitiously by John Danter, probably from an acting copy, representing more or less faithfully the text of the play as the play first came from Shakespeare's hands, presumably in or about 1591, its deviations from

that text being probably unimportant and due simply to carelessness and blunders on the part of the printers. This, however, is not the opinion of Mommsen, Collier, Grant White, the Cambridge editors, and Mr. P. A. Daniel, who in varying degrees of emphasis and modification conjecture that it was made up partly from copies of portions of the original play, partly from recollection and from notes taken during the performance. But it was very strongly the opinion of Knight, of Ulrici, of Halliwell, and, as I gather, of Dyce. In any case, the most sceptical of critics could not doubt that the Quarto of 1597, whatever may have been its source or sources, represents an earlier text, — a text very carefully revised and augmented in the Quarto of 1599. Even conceding what the critics above mentioned infer,— and certainty on such a matter is impossible, — the point of importance is not much affected. It still remains indisputable that the poet carefully revised and worked over the play, transforming the text of 1597 into the text of 1599, which is practically its present form. It was fortunate for Shakespeare's comfort that he does not appear to have been very sensitive to the tortures inflicted by printers. He must have taken immense pains with the revision of the second Quarto. But his "copy" was first mercilessly mutilated by the transcriber, who not merely imported blunders of his own into it, but took unwarrantable liberties with the text, on more than one occasion transferring verse into prose. Then followed the printer, who sowed a more abundant harvest of corruption, mispunctuation or no punctua-

tion, errors clerical, errors of omission, errors of misplacement, making the confusion of the transcriber's copy worse confounded. A third Quarto followed in 1609, printed from that of 1599, but with additional errors. The next, reprinting the third, is undated, and is remarkable as being the first which has Shakespeare's name on the title-page. It corrects some obvious blunders, but it does little else. The next Quarto, a reprint of Quarto four, appeared, printed by R. Young for John Smethwicke in 1637. Its chief feature is a careful revision of the punctuation. The text of the First Folio of 1623 is based on that of the Third Quarto, and where it differs from it, it differs generally for the worst, except only in more correct punctuation and in fuller and more correct stage-directions. The consequence of all this is that the text of this, one of the most purely beautiful of Shakespeare's compositions, remains a patchwork made up at the discretion of its editors from readings selected chiefly from the unrevised Quarto of 1597 and the revised Quarto of 1599, with occasional contributions from conjecture from the other Quartos and the Folios, — a melancholy illustration of the relation of the text as we have it now to the text as it came from his pen.

It may be well to give a few illustrations of the process by which the text of 1597 was transformed into the text of 1599. Can any one doubt, when he turns to the following passages, that we see the poet not restoring what some stenographer or stupid printer has maltreated or omitted, but revising and improving his own work, and this in the maturity of his powers, after

an interval during which he had produced such dramas as "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," the "Midsummer Night's Dream," the "Merchant of Venice," "King John," and the two parts of "Henry IV"? The additions and alterations are printed in italics, except where parallel passages are given at length.

"Welcome Gentlemen, welcome Gentlemen,
Ladies that have their toes unplagud with Corns
Will have about with you, ah ha my Mistresses,
Which of you all will now refuse to dance?
Shee that makes daintie, shee Ile sweare hath Corns.
Am I come neere you now, welcome Gentlemen, welcome."
Q. 1597 (I, v).

"Welcome gentlemen, Ladies that have their toes
Unplagued with Cornes, will walke about with you:
Ah my mistresses, which of you all
Will now denie to daunce, she that makes daintie,
She Ile swear hath Corns: am I come neare ye now?
Welcome gentlemen, I have seene the day
That I have worne a visor and could tell
A whispering tale in a faire Ladies eare:
Such as would please: tis gone, tis gone, tis gone,
You are welcome, gentlemen come, Musitions play."
Q. 1599.

The following lines are added in Friar Laurence's speech, II, iii:

"The earth that's natures mother is her tombe,
What is her burying grave, that is her wombe:
And from her wombe children of divers kinde,
We sucking on her naturall bosome finde:
Many for many, vertues excellent:
None but for some, and yet all different."

And the following are added to Juliet's soliloquy, II, v:

"Oh she is lazie, Loves heralds should be thoughts,
And runne more swift, than hastie powder fierd,
Doth hurrie from the fearfull Cannons mouth."
Q. 1597.

"Oh she is lame, loves heraulds should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glides then the Suns beames,
Driving backe shadowes over lowring hills.
Therefore do nimble piniond doves draw love,
And therefore hath the wind swift *Cupid* wings:
Now is the Sun upon the highmost hill,
Of this dayes journey, and from nine till twelve,
Is there long houres, yet she is not come,
Had she affections and warme youthfull bloud,
She would be as swift in motion as a ball,
My words would bandie her to my sweete love."
Q. 1599.

The fine and pathetic soliloquy of Juliet in IV, iii, is evolved out of these few meagre lines:

"Farewell, God knowes when wee shall meete againe.
Ah, I doo take a fearfull thing in hand.
What if this Potion should not worke at all,
Must I of force be married to the Countie?
This shall forbid it. Knife, lye thou there.
What if the Frier should give me this drinke
To poyson mee, for feare I should disclose
Our former marriage? Ah, I wrong him much,
He is a holy and religious Man:
I will not entertaine so bad a thought.
What if I should be stifled in the Toomb?
Awake an houre before the appointed time:
Ah then I feare I shall be lunaticke,
And playing with my dead forefathers bones."

Whoever will compare this with the text as it now stands, which is the text of the 1599 Quarto, will see at once that the additions represent a rewriting of the passage and not any supplement to imperfect reporting or printing; it is the poet's *development* of his own cruder work.

Take again Romeo's soliloquy in the tomb, V, iii. This in the Quarto of 1597, lines 88 to 124, is solely represented by the following:

"Death lye thou there, by a dead man interd,
How oft have many at the houre of death
Beene blith and pleasant? which their keepers call
A lightning before death But how may I
Call this a lightning. Ah deare *Juliet*,
How well thy beauty doth become this grave?
O I beleeve that unsubstanciall death,
Is amorous, and doth court my love.
Therefore will I, O heere, O ever heere,
Set up my everlasting rest
With wormes, that are thy chamber mayds.
Come desperate Pilot now at once runne on
The dashing rockes thy sea-sicke weary barge.
Heers to my love. O true Apothecary:
Thy drugs are swift: thus with a kisse I dye."

Here, as in all the former cases, there is no hiatus in the Quarto of 1597; the additions are the poet's own rich and splendid supplements and improvements. Compare again in the second scene of the second act Juliet's

"Sweare not at al, though I doo joy in thee,
I have small joy in this contract to night,

It is too rash, too sodaine, too unadvisde,
Too like the lightning that doth cease to bee
Ere one can say it lightens."

Compare this with its superb expression in the second Quarto:

*Ju.* "Well do not sweare, although I joy in thee:
I have no joy of this contract to night,
It is too rash, too unadvisd, too sudden,
Too like the lightning which doth cease to bee,
Ere one can say, it lightens. sweete goodnight:
This bud of love by Sommers ripening breath,
May prove a bewtious floure when next we meete,
Goodnight, goodnight, as sweete repose and rest,
Come to thy heart, as that within my brest.
*Ro.* O wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?
*Juli.* What satisfaction canst thou have to night?
*Ro.* Th' exchange of thy loves faithful vow for mine.
*Ju.* I gave thee mine before thou didst request it:
And yet I would it were to give againe.
*Ro.* Woldst thou withdraw it for what purpose love?
*Ju.* But to be franke and give it thee againe,
And yet I wish but for the thing I have,
My bountie is as boundlesse as the sea,
My love as deepe, the more I give to thee
The more I have, for both are infinite.
I heare some noyse within."

Take again the dialogue between Romeo and Friar Laurence in the sixth scene of the second act. In the 1597 Quarto we have:

"*Rom.* And come she will.
*Fr.* I gesse she will indeed,
Youths love is quicke, swifter than swiftest speed.

*Enter* Juliet *somewhat fast, and embraceth* Romeo.

See where she comes.
So light of foote nere hurts the troden flower:
Of love and joy, see see the soveraigne power."

For this is substituted in the 1599 Quarto:

"Fri. These violent delights have violent endes,
And in their triumph die like fier and powder:
Which as they kisse consume. The sweetest honey
Is loathsome in his owne deliciousnesse,
And in the taste confoundes the appetite.
Therefore love moderately, long love doth so,
Too swift arrives, as tardie as too slowe.

*Enter* Juliet.

Here comes the Lady, Oh so light a foote
Will nere weare out the everlasting flint,
A lover may bestride the gossamours,
That ydeles in the wanton sommer ayre,
And yet not fall, so light is vanitie."

Whoever, I repeat, will consider these passages must feel that they can only represent Shakespeare's revision of his own work, and that it is in a high degree improbable that they merely restore what was deficient either in an imperfect acting copy or an imperfect transcript. It is, of course, possible that some of them may represent the restoration of "cuts" of what had been excised for the purpose of shortening the play for stage purposes, but this is not likely.

The plot is founded on a story which had been often told, and was familiar to Shakespeare's contemporaries

through a long narrative poem by Arthur Brooke, entitled "The Tragicall Hystory of Romeus and Juliet," published first in 1562 and again by the same printer, Richard Tottel, in 1587, and by a prose version in Painter's "Palace of Pleasure"; there was also, as we learn from Brooke's preface, a play on the subject, his words being, "I saw the same argument lately set foorth on stage with more commendation than I can hope for," but of this play not a vestige remains. It was originally told in Italian by Luigi da Porto in a novel first printed in 1535, and reprinted in 1539 and again in 1553. Bandello then related it more elaborately in 1554. It then appeared in French under the title of "Histoire de deux amans dont l'un mourut de venin, l'autre de tristesse," a version with numerous variations of Bandello's novel by Pierre Boisteau and inserted in Belleforest's "Histoires Tragiques," 1559. It was on Boisteau's version, not on Bandello's, that Brooke founded his poem, in spite of the assertion on his title-page that Bandello was his original. It is abundantly clear that Shakespeare travelled no further than Brooke's poem, unless there was some play on the subject — possibly the one referred to by Brooke not now extant. Shakespeare follows Brooke with almost servile fidelity, so far at least as the incidents are concerned, and he is indebted to him for much more besides. The feuds between the Capulets and Montagues and the brawl between the servants and their masters, with which the play opens; Romeo's infatuation for Rosaline, who is anonymous in the poem; Benvolio's taunting pleasantry;

the feast at Capulet's house with his list of the guests; the discovery of the presence of a Montague and the forbearance of the Capulets that the feast may not be disturbed; the first meeting of Romeo and Juliet, and the instantaneous transference of Romeo's affections from Rosaline to Juliet; Mercutio and the part played by him; the nurse, who is evolved from Brooke's sketch, and the part played by her; Juliet at her window and the interview with Romeo; the visit to Friar Laurence; the secret marrriage; the encounter in the streets and the death of Tybalt; the exile of Romeo; his violence in Friar Laurence's cell and the Friar's rebuke; the parting of the lovers; the plan of Capulet and his wife to marry Juliet to the County Paris and the poor girl's protests; the visit to Friar Laurence and the poison-potion; Juliet's agonies of fear; the scene on the morning of the marriage; the letter to Romeo and Friar John's miscarriage because of the plague; the conveyance of the news of Juliet's supposed death to Romeo; his visit to the Apothecary and the purchase of the poison by a heavy bribe; the scene in the grave; the death of the lovers, and the arrest and explanation of Friar Laurence, — all this is directly transferred from Brooke. Among the many touches suggested by Brooke may be cited Juliet's asking the nurse the names of other guests, that she may disguise the real object of her inquiry — Romeo — whom she places last:

"What twayne are those quoth she that prease unto the doore,
Whose pages in theyr hand doe beare two toorches light before?
And then as eche of them had of his house-hold name,

So she him namde. Yet once agayne the yong and wyly dame: —
And tell me who is he with vysor in his hand,
That yender doth in masking weede beysyde the window stand" —

a fine touch of nature, which Shakespeare instantly seized. Occasionally he reproduces the very phrases of the poem, as when the Apothecary describes the effects of the poison, —

"Such *soon-speeding geer*
As will disperse itself through all the veins" (V, i),

which is Brooke's

"Fayr, Syr (quoth he) be sure this is *the speeding geer.*"

So again, when in Romeo's last soliloquy he wrote,

"Now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark" (V, iii),

he no doubt had in his memory Brooke's

"God graunt, no dangers rock, ylurking in the dark
Before thou win the happy port, wracke thy sea-beaten barke."

Lady Capulet's remarks to Juliet about her mourning for Tybalt, III, v,

"What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?
An if thou couldst," etc.,

echoes Brooke's

"Tybalt your friend is dead, what meene you by your tears
To call him back againe?"

But nothing is more interesting than to note how in the characters he develops what Brooke adumbrates, how he realises, as it were, Brooke's more or less shadowy figures. The most striking illustration of this is Friar Laurence. Brooke describes him as one who "knew the secrets in Nature's woorkes that loorke," represents him as calm, composed, philosophical, and kindly, consenting to marry the lovers because he thought that such a marriage might put an end to the feuds between the two families. The dignified rebuke which he gives to Romeo for his intemperance,

> "Art thou quoth he a man? Thy shape saith, so thou art,
> Thy crying and thy weping eyes denote a womans hart
> For manly reason is quite out of thy minde out-chas'd
> . . . . . .
> So that I stood in doubte . . .
> If thou a man or woman wert, or else a brutish beast,"

so impressed Shakespeare that it will be seen he simply repeats the passage, scarcely changing the words. Brooke emphasises his philosophical temper by putting long ethical speeches in his mouth. If he owed the conception of Friar Laurence to Brooke, to Brooke he was also indebted for the nurse, whose character, however, he has more elaborately developed. But her garrulous reminiscences of Juliet's babyhood and childhood, her mingled coarseness and kindliness, her easy compliancy, the distrust with which Juliet plainly regards her, her affected indifference to bribes, which she greedily accepts from Romeo and probably from Paris, her depreciation

of Romeo after his banishment, and her pleading the cause of Paris as emphatically as she had pleaded that of Romeo before, — all this furnishes Shakespeare with hints for his inimitable portrait. The traits introduced by himself, for which he found no suggestion in Brooke, come out in her relations with Peter, in her attitude towards Friar Laurence, and in the scene in which Capulet so brutally lectures Juliet — her coquetry and womanly vanity — "Peter, my fan," "Where 's my man?" her naïveté,

> "O Lord, I could have stay'd here all the night
> To hear good counsel: O, what learning is!" (III, iii),

her touchy self-importance when she thinks Mercutio has been running her down,

> "Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirt-gills; I am none of his skains-mates" (II, iv),

and her burst of honest indignation, when her woman's heart is touched, at old Capulet's treatment of his daughter,

> "God in heaven bless her!
> You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so" (III, v).

To Shakespeare also belong her amusing fussiness, garrulity, bemuddlement, and "wiggle-waggle," which make her a sort of female Polonius. Juliet's character he directly deduces from Brooke's poem, adding little or nothing; but Romeo is his own creation. It is not very easy to see what Coleridge meant by saying that Romeo is Hamlet in love, for if he has something of Hamlet's morbidity and much of his melancholy he has nothing of his

essentially philosophical temper, nothing of his critical brooding introspection and restless intellectual activity, nothing of his many-sidedness. He is little more than the incarnation of that type of character which Aristotle describes as τοῖς πάθεσιν ἀκολουθητίκον — obediently following the passions. He admirably describes himself as "one whom God hath made himself to mar." Without effeminacy, for when roused he has all the courage of the most courageous, he is so completely under the thraldom of his desire that he becomes not so much its slave as its absolute possession. Consider for a moment the *intensity* of such an expression as this, — he is speaking of his banishment, —

> "'Tis torture, and not mercy: heaven is here,
> Where Juliet lives; and every cat and dog
> And little mouse, every unworthy thing,
> Live here in heaven and may look on her,
> But Romeo may not" (III, iii),

or of the following,

> "Shall I believe
> That unsubstantial death is amorous,
> And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
> Thee here in dark to be his paramour?" (V, iii),

and what pathos the poet has thrown round the character, how beautiful the traits, which not merely redeem Romeo from contempt, but transform contempt into affection and pity! —

> "Villain am I none;
> Therefore farewell; I see thou know'st me not" (III, i),

is his answer to Tybalt's gross insults, and so when Paris provokes him to a duel at the tomb of the Capulets,

> "I beseech thee, youth,
> Heap not another sin upon my head,
> By urging me to fury: O, be gone!
> By heaven, I love thee better than myself" (V, iii).

Nor does Brooke furnish even a hint for the inimitable creation of Mercutio, who is merely described as "a courtier highly had in price," "courteous of his speech and pleasant of devise." That Shakespeare, after lavishing on him such treasures of wit and fancy and nature, should have the heart to drop him out of the action so early in the play is only one of the many illustrations he has given us of his subordination of everything to dramatic requirement and propriety.

Shakespeare's chief deviations from Brooke's narrative are interesting and sometimes curious. In the first place Brooke makes the action extend over some five months — a month passing between the marriage and the death of Tybalt; in the play it extends over exactly four days, from Sunday morning "but now struck nine" till the following Thursday night. Brooke makes Juliet just over sixteen years of age, Shakespeare not yet fourteen. Brooke does not give the name of Romeo's first mistress; Shakespeare calls her Rosaline. In Brooke the man who conveys to Romeo the news of Juliet's supposed death is merely called "Romeus' man"; Shakespeare names him Balthasar. In Brooke Peter accompanies Romeo to the tomb; in Shakespeare Balthasar, to whom Shakespeare makes Romeo address

precisely the same instructions as in Brooke are given to Peter —

> "Take there a letter which, as soon as he shall ryse,
> Present it in the morning to my loving father's eyes.
> . . . . . .
> And straight when I am gone fro thee, my Juliet to bemone
> See that thou get hence, and on the paine of death
> I charge thee that thou come not nere while I abyde beneath."

In this scene Shakespeare introduces incidents, and very important ones, which are not in Brooke's poem, namely, the entrance of Paris and his interview and duel with Romeo, together with Romeo's reflections while gazing on the body of Paris after he has killed him.

"Romeo and Juliet" is one of the most elaborately finished of Shakespeare's plays. And this elaboration is seen in the diction and style, which have every attraction that rhetoric can give them; nothing could possibly be more finished and perfect in expression than the many soliloquies and set speeches with which the play abounds, or than the dialogues, all of which, whatever be their tone and theme, are the perfection of composition, ranging as they do from coarse prosaic colloquy to the very heights of ornate and impassioned rhetoric. The play has all the complexity and variety of life itself, both in relation to incident and in relation to character, and it is easy to see that the poet spared no pains to secure this effect. We need go no further than its dramatis personæ, at once so studiously finished as individual portraits and so elaborately and strikingly contrasted, to illustrate this. It is indeed wonderful that in a single

drama we should have such a gallery of living figures as is presented to us in Romeo, in Friar Laurence, in Mercutio, in Tybalt, in old Montague, and in old Capulet, in Juliet, in the nurse, in Lady Capulet. Another illustration of the careful and subtle art with which the drama was composed is the use which is made of the supernatural, the influence of which is made in some insensibly mysterious way to pervade the whole action, so that some unseen power seems to be imperceptibly urging the lovers to their doom, which adds to the pathos.

> "My mind misgives
> Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,
> Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
> With this night's revels" (I, iv),

are Romeo's ominous words as he is about to meet Juliet.

> "O God! I have an ill-divining soul.
> Methinks I see thee, now thou art below,
> As one dead in the bottom of a tomb" (III, v).

exclaims Juliet, as she parts from her lover. So Romeo, just when he is about to hear the news which will bring death to him, observes:

> "My bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne.
> And all this day an unaccostom'd spirit
> Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.
> I dreamt my lady came and found me dead —
> . . . . . .
> And breathed such life with kisses in my lips
> That I revived" (V, i).

"How oft to-night
Have my old feet stumbled at graves!" (V, iii)

is Friar Laurence's remark just before he is to discover the dead bodies of the lovers. And lastly we have Balthasar's dream,

"As I did sleep under this yew-tree here,
I dreamt my master and another fought,
And that my master slew him" (V, iii).

Irony, which was to play so important a part in his later dramas, is in this play twice introduced with appallingly impressive effect, as where poor Juliet on first meeting Romeo says,

"If he be married,
My grave is like to be my wedding bed" (I, v),

or that more awful flash from Lady Capulet's lips,

"I would the fool were married to her grave!" (III, v).

The tremendous pace at which the action of this play, impelled by the passions of hatred and love, proceeds, —

"Sweet as a shadow short as any dream
Brief as the lightning in the collied night
That in a spleen unfolds lost heaven and earth
And ere a man hath power to say 'Behold!'
The jaws of darkness do devour it up" —

though difficult to reconcile with probability, has strict dramatic propriety; and this consideration no doubt induced Shakespeare to substitute his own chronology for that of Brooke. It has been doubted whether, if

Shakespeare had not visited Italy or Spain, he could have written this drama, for its world and its atmosphere are not easily realisable in northern latitudes. The reply to this is that the poet of "Venus and Adonis," of the "Rape of Lucrece" and the "Sonnets," could with Brooke's narrative in his hands have had little difficulty in conceiving what finds embodiment in its incidents and in its characters. With those works it links itself, and is, so far as the passion suffusing it goes, simply the objective expression of what in them assumes subjective form. But Shakespeare was now an artist and dramatist rapidly approaching the fullest maturity of his powers, and if "Romeo and Juliet" is the link between his work as a poet and his work as a dramatic artist, it forms also another link. It is perhaps the earliest of his plays in which he strikes a note essentially characteristic of his mature work, namely, high seriousness. This finds expression in the weighty words placed in the mouth of Friar Laurence, in which it will be seen we have the moral key to the action of the play, —

> "Within the infant rind of this small flower
> Poison hath residence, and medicine power:
> For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part,
> Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.
> Two such opposed kings encamp them still
> In man as well as herbs, grace and rude will;
> And where the worser is predominant,
> Full soon the canker death eats up that plant" (II, iii),

and again in the words of Escalus at the end of the play,

"Capulet! Montague!
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!
And I, for winking at your discords too,
Have lost a brace of kinsmen: all are punish'd" (V, iii).

It is remarkable that the play opens with bringing into emphatic prominence an illustration of the anarchy resulting from the feuds between the two families, — an anarchy to which every disaster included in the action can be directly or indirectly traced, — and the impotence of the power which should have suppressed such evils. It is in this all-embracing, deep-seated sympathy and insight, and in this habitual interpretation of life, not in relation to mere phenomena or second causes, but in the light of eternal principles and of essential truth, that the greatness of Shakespeare lies.

J. Churton Collins.

# ROMEO AND JULIET

# DRAMATIS PERSONÆ[1]

ESCALUS, prince of Verona.
PARIS, a young nobleman, kinsman to the prince.
MONTAGUE, } heads of two houses at variance with each other.
CAPULET, }
An old man, of the Capulet family.
ROMEO, son to Montague.
MERCUTIO, kinsman to the prince, and friend to Romeo.
BENVOLIO, nephew to Montague, and friend to Romeo.
TYBALT, nephew to Lady Capulet.
FRIAR LAURENCE, a Franciscan.
FRIAR JOHN, of the same order.
BALTHASAR, servant to Romeo.
SAMPSON, } servants to Capulet.
GREGORY, }
PETER, servant to Juliet's nurse.
ABRAHAM, servant to Montague.
An Apothecary.
Three Musicians.
Page to Paris ; another Page ; an Officer.

LADY MONTAGUE, wife to Montague.
LADY CAPULET, wife to Capulet.
JULIET, daughter to Capulet.
Nurse to Juliet.

Citizens of Verona ; kinsfolk of both houses ; Maskers, Guards, Watchmen, and Attendants.

Chorus.

SCENE : *Verona ; Mantua*

[1] The piece was first printed, from a crude and imperfect transcript, in quarto in 1597. In 1599 there appeared for the first time a complete version, of which a revision came out in 1609, and two later reissues in quarto, one without date and the other in 1637. The First Folio followed the Third Quarto with a few changes for the worse. None of the early editions divide the play into Acts or Scenes, though in the First Folio the play opens with the words " Actus Primus. Scœna Prima." The scenic subdivisions, as well as the list of dramatis personæ, were first supplied by Rowe in 1709.

# PROLOGUE

*Enter* CHORUS

CHORUS

WO HOUSEHOLDS, BOTH alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,

1–14 *Two households . . . mend*] This prologue (which is in the sonnet form) appears only in the Quartos. It is omitted from the Folios. Act II is introduced in like fashion, and the Sonnet, which forms the prologue to the second Act, appears in the Folios as well as the Quartos. The remaining Acts are without prologues.

And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

6 *star-cross'd*] an astrological allusion to adverse planetary influences; ill-fated, thwarted by their evil stars.

12 *two hours' traffic*] Cf. *Hen. VIII, Prol.*, lines 12, 13: "[spectators] may see away their shilling Richly *in two short hours.*" Two hours seem to have been a conventional estimate of the length of a dramatic performance, but that period was probably often exceeded.

## ACT FIRST — SCENE I — VERONA

*A PUBLIC PLACE*

*Enter* SAMPSON *and* GREGORY, *of the house of Capulet, with swords and bucklers*

SAMPSON

GREGORY, ON MY WORD, we 'll not carry coals.

GRE. No, for then we should be colliers.

SAM. I mean, an we be in choler, we 'll draw.

GRE. Ay, while you live, draw your neck out o' the collar.

SAM. I strike quickly, being moved.

GRE. But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

SAM. A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

GRE. To move is to stir, and to be valiant is to stand: therefore, if thou art moved, thou runn'st away.

1 *carry coals*] tamely suffer insult or humiliation. Menials who were employed to carry coals in Elizabethan houses were reckoned the most

SAM. A dog of that house shall move me to stand: I will take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's.

GRE. That shows thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes to the wall.

SAM. 'T is true; and therefore women, being the weaker vessels, are ever thrust to the wall: therefore I will push Montague's men from the wall and thrust his maids to the wall.

GRE. The quarrel is between our masters and us their men.

SAM. 'T is all one, I will show myself a tyrant: when I have fought with the men, I will be cruel with the maids; I will cut off their heads.

GRE. The heads of the maids?

SAM. Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maidenheads; take it in what sense thou wilt.

GRE. They must take it in sense that feel it.

SAM. Me they shall feel while I am able to stand: and 't is known I am a pretty piece of flesh.

GRE. 'T is well thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst been poor John. Draw thy tool; here comes two of the house of Montagues.

contemptible of drudges. The expression is in its metaphorical usage common in Elizabethan literature. Cf. *Hen. V*, III, ii, 45.

2 *colliers*] a term of contempt, used like the modern "sweep."

12 *take the wall of*] get the better of.

22 *cruel*] Thus the Fourth and Fifth Quartos. The earliest Quartos and the Folios read *civil*, which a few modern editors seek to defend, by giving the word the meaning of "peaceful."

31 *poor John*] Dried hake, an inferior sort of cod, the staple fare of poor people.

31–32 *here comes two . . . Montagues*] The partisans of the Montagues

*Enter* ABRAHAM *and* BALTHASAR

SAM. My naked weapon is out: quarrel; I will back thee.

GRE. How! turn thy back and run?

SAM. Fear me not.

GRE. No, marry; I fear thee!

SAM. Let us take the law of our sides; let them begin.

GRE. I will frown as I pass by, and let them take it as they list.

SAM Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them; which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.

ABR. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAM. I do bite my thumb, sir.

ABR. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAM. [*Aside to Gre.*] Is the law of our side, if I say ay?

GRE. No.

SAM. No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir; but I bite my thumb, sir.

GRE. Do you quarrel, sir?

were known from a token worn in their hats. The false concord between the singular verb and the plural noun is in keeping with Gregory's mode of speech.

33 (stage direction) *Enter . . .* BALTHASAR] The old editions read *Enter two other servingmen.* To five speeches below the name ABRAM is prefixed. Rowe introduced the other name of BALTHASAR, who is mentioned as Romeo's servant, V, i, 12, *infra.*

38 *take the law of*] keep the law on.

41 *bite my thumb*] a common mode of insult. Cotgrave under the word "nique" has this entry, "Faire la nique: to threaten or defie by putting the thumb nail into the mouth and with a jerke (from the upper teeth) make it to knacke."

ABR. Quarrel, sir! no, sir.

SAM. But if you do, sir, I am for you: I serve as good a man as you.

ABR. No better.

SAM. Well, sir.

*Enter* BENVOLIO

GRE. [*Aside to Sam.*] Say "better": here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

SAM. Yes, better, sir.

ABR. You lie.

SAM. Draw, if you be men. Gregory, remember thy swashing blow. [*They fight.* 61

BEN. Part, fools! [*Beating down their weapons.*
Put up your swords; you know not what you do.

*Enter* TYBALT

TYB. What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?
Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

BEN. I do but keep thy peace: put up thy sword,
Or manage it to part these men with me.

TYB. What, drawn, and talk of peace! I hate the word,
As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee:
Have at thee, coward! [*They fight.* 70

---

56–57 *here comes one . . . kinsmen*] Gregory notices the approach of Tybalt, who enters after line 63.

61 *swashing*] Thus the later Quartos. The early Quartos and the Folios read *washing*, which has been defended. But *swashing*, *i. e.*, violent, overpowering, has better justification.

*Enter several of both houses, who join the fray; then enter* Citizens *and* Peace-officers, *with clubs*

FIRST OFF. Clubs, bills, and partisans! strike! beat them down!
Down with the Capulets! down with the Montagues!

*Enter old* CAPULET *in his gown, and* LADY CAPULET

CAP. What noise is this? Give me my long sword, ho!
LA. CAP. A crutch, a crutch! why call you for a sword?
CAP. My sword, I say! Old Montague is come,
And flourishes his blade in spite of me.

*Enter old* MONTAGUE *and* LADY MONTAGUE

MON. Thou villain Capulet!—Hold me not, let me go.
LA. MON. Thou shalt not stir on foot to seek a foe.

*Enter* PRINCE ESCALUS, *with his train*

PRIN. Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
Profaners of this neighbour-stained steel, — 80

71 *Clubs! . . . partisans!*] "Clubs!" was the common cry of both the actors and the onlookers in a street fray, and usually amounted to a call for the intervention of constable or watchman. "Bills" were the watchmen's pikes; "partisans" their halberds.

73 (stage direction) *Enter old* CAPULET *in his gown*] Capulet, roused from sleep, comes forth in his dressing-gown.

*long sword*] a sword used in active warfare. The short sword was only used as an ornament.

80 *neighbour-stained*] stained with the blood of neighbours.

Will they not hear? What, ho! you men, you beasts,
That quench the fire of your pernicious rage
With purple fountains issuing from your veins,
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands
Throw your mistemper'd weapons to the ground,
And hear the sentence of your moved prince.
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets,
And made Verona's ancient citizens
Cast by their grave beseeming ornaments,
To wield old partisans, in hands as old,
Canker'd with peace, to part your canker'd hate:
If ever you disturb our streets again,
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.
For this time, all the rest depart away:
You, Capulet, shall go along with me;
And, Montague, come you this afternoon,
To know our farther pleasure in this case,
To old Free-town, our common judgement-place.
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

[*Exeunt all but Montague, Lady Montague, and Benvolio.*

85 *mistemper'd*] tempered for an ill purpose, angry. Cf. *K. John*, V, i, 12: "This inundation of *mistempered* humour."

93 *Canker'd . . . hate*] Corroded through long years of peace, to separate you in your outbreak of malignant hate.

100 *old Free-town*] Arthur Brooke, in his poetical version of the Italian story of Romeo and Juliet, calls the Capulets' castle "Free-town." In Bandello's Italian original, and in the French and other English translations, "Villa Franca" is the name of a pleasure-house, owned by Capulet, outside Verona. Shakespeare alone makes it the prince's "judgement-place."

MON. Who set this ancient quarrel new abroach?
Speak, nephew, were you by when it began?
BEN. Here were the servants of your adversary
And yours close fighting ere I did approach:
I drew to part them: in the instant came
The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepared;
Which, as he breathed defiance to my ears,
He swung about his head, and cut the winds,
Who, nothing hurt withal, hiss'd him in scorn:
While we were interchanging thrusts and blows,
Came more and more, and fought on part and part,
Till the prince came, who parted either part.
LA. MON. O, where is Romeo? saw you him to-day?
Right glad I am he was not at this fray.
BEN. Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun
Peer'd forth the golden window of the east,
A troubled mind drave me to walk abroad;
Where, underneath the grove of sycamore
That westward rooteth from the city's side,
So early walking did I see your son:
Towards him I made; but he was ware of me,
And stole into the covert of the wood:
I, measuring his affections by my own,
Which then most sought where most might not be found,
Being one too many by my weary self,
Pursued my humour, not pursuing his,
And gladly shunn'd who gladly fled from me.

---

116 *the worshipp'd sun*] an allusion to the ritual of sun worship. Cf. *L. L. L.*, IV, iii, 220, and note.

125 *where most . . . found*] the place where there were fewest people.

MON. Many a morning hath he there been seen,
With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,
Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs:
But all so soon as the all-cheering sun
Should in the farthest east begin to draw
The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,
Away from light steals home my heavy son,
And private in his chamber pens himself,
Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out,
And makes himself an artificial night:
Black and portentous must this humour prove,
Unless good counsel may the cause remove.
BEN. My noble uncle, do you know the cause?
MON. I neither know it nor can learn of him.
BEN. Have you importuned him by any means?
MON. Both by myself and many other friends:
But he, his own affections' counsellor,
Is to himself — I will not say how true —
But to himself so secret and so close,
So far from sounding and discovery,
As is the bud bit with an envious worm,
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
Or dedicate his beauty to the sun.
Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow,
We would as willingly give cure as know.

---

149 *envious*] malicious, malignant.

151 *the sun*] This is Theobald's correction of the original misreading *the same*.

*Enter* ROMEO

BEN. See, where he comes: so please you step aside,
I'll know his grievance, or be much denied.
MON. I would thou wert so happy by thy stay,
To hear true shrift. Come, madam, let's away.
[*Exeunt Montague and Lady.*
BEN. Good morrow, cousin.
ROM. Is the day so young?
BEN. But new struck nine.
ROM. Ay me! sad hours seem long.
Was that my father that went hence so fast?
BEN. It was. What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?
ROM. Not having that which, having, makes them short.
BEN. In love?
ROM. Out —
BEN. Of love?
ROM. Out of her favour, where I am in love.
BEN. Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!
ROM. Alas, that love, whose view is muffled still,
Should without eyes see pathways to his will!

168 *proof*] practical experience.
169–170 *Alas, that love . . . his will!*] Romeo laments that love, in spite of his blindness, should make his way through by-paths where his presence is not suspected (and should thus render escape from his toils well-nigh impossible).

Where shall we dine? O me! What fray was here?
Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.
Here's much to do with hate, but more with love:
Why, then, O brawling love! O loving hate!
O any thing, of nothing first create!
O heavy lightness! serious vanity!
Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!
This love feel I, that feel no love in this. 180
Dost thou not laugh?
BEN. No, coz, I rather weep.
ROM. Good heart, at what?
BEN. At thy good heart's oppression.
ROM. Why, such is love's transgression.
Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast;
Which thou wilt propagate, to have it prest
With more of thine: this love that thou hast shown
Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.
Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;

---

174–179 *O brawling love! . . . sleep*] This conventional string of antitheses was characteristic of much current amorous poetry, in both France and Italy, as well as in England. Shakespeare's free employment of these affected conceits is probably intended to suggest the superficiality of Romeo's passion for Rosaline.

183 *Why . . . transgression*] a short line, which many editors complete by introducing *Benvolio* after *such*. But a playful retort of this kind is sometimes interpolated with irregular metrical effect.

188 *Love . . . sighs*] Lovers' sighs were poetically conceived to rise in the air and form smoke-like clouds in the sky. Cf. II, iii, 73, *infra:* "The sun not yet *thy sighs from heaven clears.*"

Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:
What is it else? a madness most discreet,
A choking gall and a preserving sweet.
Farewell, my coz.
BEN. Soft! I will go along:
An if you leave me so, you do me wrong.
ROM. Tut, I have lost myself; I am not here;
This is not Romeo, he's some other where.
BEN. Tell me in sadness, who is that you love?
ROM. What, shall I groan and tell thee?
BEN. Groan! why, no;
But sadly tell me who.
ROM. Bid a sick man in sadness make his will:
Ah, word ill urged to one that is so ill!
In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.
BEN. I aim'd so near when I supposed you loved.
ROM. A right good mark-man! And she's fair I love.
BEN. A right fair mark, fair coz, is soonest hit.
ROM. Well, in that hit you miss: she'll not be hit
With Cupid's arrow; she hath Dian's wit,
And in strong proof of chastity well arm'd,
From love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd.
She will not stay the siege of loving terms,
Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes,

189 *purged*] purged or purified of smoke.
197 *in sadness*] in all seriousness.
209 *unharm'd*] Thus the First Quarto, for which other early editions substitute *vncharmd*. The latter word some editors take to be a misprint for *encharmed*, *i. e.*, protected by a charm. But this reading gives a far-fetched meaning.

Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold:
O, she is rich in beauty, only poor
That, when she dies, with beauty dies her store.
BEN. Then she hath sworn that she will still live chaste?
ROM. She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste;
For beauty, starved with her severity,
Cuts beauty off from all posterity.
She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair,
To merit bliss by making me despair:
She hath forsworn to love; and in that vow
Do I live dead, that live to tell it now.
BEN. Be ruled by me, forget to think of her.
ROM. O, teach me how I should forget to think.
BEN. By giving liberty unto thine eyes;
Examine other beauties.
ROM. 'T is the way
To call hers, exquisite, in question more:

---

213–214 *only poor . . . her store*] The meaning is that Romeo's mistress is only poor in that at her death with the dissolution of her beauty, there perishes all her estate; there will be none to inherit her beauty after death. Theobald read for the last words *with her dies Beauty's Store*, which simplifies the sense. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 1019: "For he being dead, with him is beauty slain."

216–218 *She hath . . . posterity*] These lines convey the sentiment which Shakespeare elaborately develops in *Sonnets*, i–xvii. Cf. *Sonnet* iii, 7, 8: "Or who is he so fond will be the tomb Of his self-love, to stop posterity?" See also *Venus and Adonis*, 757–760.

219 *wisely too fair*] with a beauty in excess of her wisdom.

227 *To call hers, exquisite, in question more*] To declare her beauty, which

These happy masks that kiss fair ladies' brows,
Being black, put us in mind they hide the fair;
He that is strucken blind cannot forget
The precious treasure of his eyesight lost:
Show me a mistress that is passing fair,
What doth her beauty serve but as a note
Where I may read who pass'd that passing fair?
Farewell: thou canst not teach me to forget.
BEN. I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt.
[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II — A STREET

*Enter* CAPULET, PARIS, *and* Servant

CAP. But Montague is bound as well as I,
In penalty alike; and 't is not hard, I think,
For men so old as we to keep the peace.
PAR. Of honourable reckoning are you both;
And pity 't is you lived at odds so long.
But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?
CAP. But saying o'er what I have said before:
My child is yet a stranger in the world;
She hath not seen the change of fourteen years:

---

is exquisite, all the greater by talking about how it compares with that of others. The line is obscurely phrased. "Question" is constantly used in the sense of verbal inquiry, talk, or conversation.

228 *These happy masks*] The masks or veils which were habitually worn by ladies of fashion.

236 *I'll pay that doctrine*] I'll teach you that lesson.

9 *fourteen years*] Shakespeare is curiously emphatic that Juliet's age is less than fourteen (see I, iii, 13–22), where she is said to be "a fortnight and odd days" under fourteen. Earlier narrators of the story make

Let two more summers wither in their pride
Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.
PAR. Younger than she are happy mothers made.
CAP. And too soon marr'd are those so early made.
The earth hath swallow'd all my hopes but she,
She is the hopeful lady of my earth:
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart;
My will to her consent is but a part;
An she agree, within her scope of choice
Lies my consent and fair according voice.
This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,
Whereto I have invited many a guest,
Such as I love; and you among the store,
One more, most welcome, makes my number more.
At my poor house look to behold this night
Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light:
Such comfort as do lusty young men feel

---

the heroine older. According to Arthur Brooke's poem, she was sixteen. Painter, following verbatim the French translation of Bandello, makes her eighteen. Bandello and his Italian predecessor Luigi da Porto both represent Juliet's mother as saying at the crisis of her fate, that she will complete her eighteenth year on the coming festival of Santa Euphemia (September 16).

15 *the hopeful lady of my earth*] probably "the hopeful or well-promising mistress of my being, my world, my life." There is a French phrase "fille de terre" meaning "heiress," which Shakespeare may have had in mind. For a similar use of "earth" cf. *Sonnet* cxlvi, 1: "Poor soul, the centre of my sinful *earth*," and II, i, 2, *infra*.

17 *My will . . . but a part*] My will is only ancillary to her consent, is merely supplemental to it, is not tantamount to it.

25 *Earth-treading stars . . . light*] Brilliant women, the radiance of whose beauty makes night light as day.

When well-apparell'd April on the heel
Of limping winter treads, even such delight
Among fresh female buds shall you this night
Inherit at my house; hear all, all see,
And like her most whose merit most shall be:
Which on more view, of many mine being one
May stand in number, though in reckoning none.
Come, go with me. Go, sirrah, trudge about
Through fair Verona; find those persons out
Whose names are written there, and to them say,
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

[*Exeunt Capulet and Paris.*

SERV. Find them out whose names are written here! It is written that the shoemaker should meddle with his yard and the tailor with his last, the fisher with his pencil and the painter with his nets; but I am sent to find those persons whose names are here writ, and can never find what names the writing person hath here writ. I must to the learned. In good time.

27 *well-apparell'd April*] Cf. *Sonnet* xcviii, 2, 3: "When proud-pied *April*, *dress'd in all his trim* Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing."

32–33 *Which on more view . . . none*] These obscure lines play with garrulous irrelevance on an old proverbial expression that "one is no number." Cf. *Sonnet* cxxxvi, 8: "Among a *number one* is reckon'd *none*." *Which on more view* is specially difficult to construe. But the antecedent of "Which" is possibly "the whole field of choice," suggested by "hear *all*, *all* see," of line 30, and the phrase is a nominative absolute. The general meaning would then be "All the ladies being more closely observed, and my daughters being one of the concourse, she may take priority even though, as the proverb has it, one does n't count."

44 *In good time*] a reference to the opportune entrance of Benvolio and Romeo.

*Enter* BENVOLIO *and* ROMEO

BEN. Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning.
One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish;
Turn giddy, and be holp by backward turning;
One desperate grief cures with another's languish:
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,
And the rank poison of the old will die.
ROM. Your plantain-leaf is excellent for that.
BEN. For what, I pray thee?
ROM. For your broken shin.
BEN. Why, Romeo, art thou mad?
ROM. Not mad, but bound more than a madman is;
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,
Whipt and tormented and — God-den, good fellow.
SERV. God gi' god-den. I pray, sir, can you read?
ROM. Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

---

45–50 *Tut, man . . . old will die*] This speech is in the six-lined stanza, which Shakespeare used in *Venus and Adonis*. Cf. lines 88–93, and V, iii, 12–17, and 304–309, *infra*. See *L. L. L.*, I, i, 147–158, and *ibid.* IV, iii, 210–215 for speeches in the same metre.

45 *one fire . . . burning*] Cf. *Two Gent.*, II, iv, 188: "Even as one heat another heat expels." The sentiment is proverbial.

51 *plantain-leaf*] The leaf, common plantain, was a popular remedy for fresh wounds. Costard calls for "a plain plantain" to cure his broken shin in *L. L. L.*, III, i, 68. Romeo ironically interrupts his friend's eloquence.

55–56 *Shut up . . . tormented*] This was the accepted mode of treating lunatics at the time.

56 *God-den*] a colloquial form of good e'en, good evening. Cf. III, v, 172, *infra*.

SERV. Perhaps you have learned it without book: but, I pray, can you read any thing you see?

ROM. Ay, if I know the letters and the language.

SERV. Ye say honestly: rest you merry.

ROM. Stay, fellow; I can read. [*Reads.*

"Signior Martino and his wife and daughters; County Anselme and his beauteous sisters; the lady widow of Vitruvio; Signior Placentio and his lovely nieces; Mercutio and his brother Valentine; mine uncle Capulet, his wife, and daughters; my fair niece Rosaline; Livia; Signior Valentio and his cousin Tybalt; Lucio and the lively Helena."

A fair assembly: whither should they come?

SERV. Up.

ROM. Whither?

SERV. To supper; to our house.

ROM. Whose house?

SERV. My master's.

ROM. Indeed, I should have ask'd you that before.

SERV. Now I'll tell you without asking: my master is the great rich Capulet; and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray, come and crush a cup of wine. Rest you merry! [*Exit.*

---

66 *Mercutio*] Although a friend of Romeo (Montague), Mercutio appears from this list to have been on visiting terms with the Capulets. But as the prince's kinsman, III, i, 142, 186, *infra*, he may have been familiar with both houses.

68 *Rosaline*] Apparently Romeo's first love, who, like her successor Juliet, was of the rival house of Capulet.

80 *crush a cup of wine*] a colloquial phrase, like the modern expression "crack a bottle."

BEN. At this same ancient feast of Capulet's
Sups the fair Rosaline whom thou so lovest,
With all the admired beauties of Verona:
Go thither, and with unattainted eye
Compare her face with some that I shall show,
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.
ROM. When the devout religion of mine eye
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires;
And these, who, often drown'd, could never die,
Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars!
One fairer than my love! the all-seeing sun
Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.
BEN. Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself poised with herself in either eye:
But in that crystal scales let there be weigh'd
Your lady's love against some other maid,
That I will show you shining at this feast,
And she shall scant show well that now seems best.
ROM. I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,
But to rejoice in splendour of mine own. [*Exeunt.*

---

88–93 *When the devout . . . world begun*] See lines 45–50, *supra*, and note.

90–91 *these, who . . . burnt*] There was an old belief that witches could not be drowned, and must therefore be burnt.

96 *that crystal scales*] "Scales" is commonly used as a singular noun.

97 *Your lady's love*] Thus all the early editions. Many editors read *Your lady-love*. But Shakespeare, writing elliptically, doubtless meant "the love you bear your lady compared with the attractions of some other maid."

## SCENE III — A ROOM IN CAPULET'S HOUSE

*Enter* LADY CAPULET *and* Nurse

LA. CAP. Nurse, where's my daughter? call her forth to me.

NURSE. Now, by my maidenhead at twelve year old,
I bade her come. What, lamb! what, lady-bird! —
God forbid! — Where's this girl? What, Juliet!

*Enter* JULIET

JUL. How now! who calls?

NURSE. Your mother.

JUL. Madam, I am here. What is your will?

LA. CAP. This is the matter. Nurse, give leave awhile,
We must talk in secret: — nurse, come back again;
I have remember'd me, thou's hear our counsel.
Thou know'st my daughter's of a pretty age.

NURSE. Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

LA. CAP. She's not fourteen.

NURSE. I'll lay fourteen of my teeth, —
And yet, to my teen be it spoken, I have but four, —
She is not fourteen. How long is it now
To Lammas-tide?

---

10 *thou's*] thou shalt.
13 *She's not fourteen*] See I, ii, 9, *supra*, and note.
14 *to my teen*] to my sorrow.
16 *Lammas-tide*] August 1.

LA. CAP. A fortnight and odd days.
NURSE. Even or odd, of all days in the year,
Come Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen.
Susan and she — God rest all Christian souls! —
Were of an age: well, Susan is with God;
She was too good for me: — but, as I said,
On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen;
That shall she, marry; I remember it well.
'T is since the earthquake now eleven years;
And she was wean'd, — I never shall forget it —
Of all the days of the year, upon that day:
For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,
Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall;
My lord and you were then at Mantua: —
Nay, I do bear a brain: — but, as I said,
When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple
Of my dug, and felt it bitter, pretty fool,
To see it tetchy, and fall out with the dug!
Shake, quoth the dove-house: 't was no need, I trow,
To bid me trudge.
And since that time it is eleven years;
For then she could stand high-lone; nay, by the rood,

24 *'T is since the earthquake now eleven years*] There was on 6 April, 1580, a severe shock of earthquake, to which the nurse may possibly make allusion. She emphasises her reference to eleven years in line 36, *infra*.

30 *I do bear a brain*] I have a good memory.

34 *Shake, quoth the dove-house*] a popular construction, meaning that the dove-house shook (owing to the earthquake).

37 *high-lone*] quite alone. Thus the First Quarto, for which later editions substitute *alone*. "High" is an intensitive prefix.

She could have run and waddled all about;
For even the day before, she broke her brow:
And then my husband, — God be with his soul!
A' was a merry man — took up the child:
"Yea," quoth he, "dost thou fall upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit;
Wilt thou not, Jule?" and, by my holidame,
The pretty wretch left crying, and said "Ay."
To see now how a jest shall come about!
I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,
I never should forget it: "Wilt thou not, Jule?" quoth he;
And, pretty fool, it stinted, and said "Ay."

LA. CAP. Enough of this; I pray thee, hold thy peace.

NURSE. Yes, madam: yet I cannot choose but laugh,
To think it should leave crying, and say "Ay:"
And yet, I warrant, it had upon it brow
A bump as big as a young cockerel's stone;
A perilous knock; and it cried bitterly:
"Yea," quoth my husband, "fall'st upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward when thou comest to age;
Wilt thou not, Jule?" it stinted, and said "Ay."

JUL. And stint thou too, I pray thee, nurse, say I.

NURSE. Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace!
Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nursed:

---

44 *holidame*] holy faith; "halidom" is a commoner form.
49 *it stinted*] it stopped weeping.
54 *cockerel*] young cock.

An I might live to see thee married once,
I have my wish.
LA. CAP. Marry, that "marry" is the very theme
I came to talk of. Tell me, daughter Juliet,
How stands your disposition to be married?
JUL. It is an honour that I dream not of.
NURSE. An honour! were not I thine only nurse,
I would say thou hadst suck'd wisdom from thy teat.
LA. CAP. Well, think of marriage now; younger than you
Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,
Are made already mothers. By my count,
I was your mother much upon these years
That you are now a maid. Thus then in brief;
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.
NURSE. A man, young lady! lady, such a man
As all the world — why, he's a man of wax.
LA. CAP. Verona's summer hath not such a flower.
NURSE. Nay, he's a flower; in faith, a very flower.
LA. CAP. What say you? can you love the gentleman?
This night you shall behold him at our feast:
Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;
Examine every married lineament,

---

77 *a man of wax*] a man finely modelled, well proportioned.

82–89 *Read o'er the volume . . . cover*] There is a like figurative comparison of a man's face to the page of a book in *L. L. L.*, II, i, 245–246.

84 *married*] harmoniously combined. Thus the Second Quarto. The other early editions read *severall*.

And see how one another lends content;
And what obscured in this fair volume lies
Find written in the margent of his eyes.
This precious book of love, this unbound lover,
To beautify him, only lacks a cover:
The fish lives in the sea; and 't is much pride
For fair without the fair within to hide:
That book in many's eyes doth share the glory,
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story:
So shall you share all that he doth possess,
By having him making yourself no less.

NURSE. No less! nay, bigger: women grow by men.

LA. CAP. Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

JUL. I'll look to like, if looking liking move:
But no more deep will I endart mine eye
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

*Enter a* Servingman

SERV. Madam, the guests are come, supper served up, you called, my young lady asked for, the nurse cursed

---

86–87 *And what obscured . . . of his eyes*] Cf. note on *Mids. N. Dr.*, II, ii, 121–122: "And leads me to your *eyes*, where I o'erlook Love's stories, written in love's richest book."

88–89 *unbound . . . cover*] The figurative language here has reference to the binding of books. But "cover" makes quibbling allusion to the law-French phrase "fem[m]e co[u]ver[te]," a wife, a married woman.

90 *The fish . . . sea*] A vague remark to the effect that the fish (which is a thing of beauty) lies hidden in the sea (which is also beautiful).

99 *endart*] dart. The word is apparently of Shakespeare's invention.

in the pantry, and every thing in extremity. I must hence to wait; I beseech you, follow straight.

LA. CAP. We follow thee. [*Exit Servingman.*] Juliet, the county stays.

NURSE. Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE IV — A STREET

*Enter* ROMEO, MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, *with five or six other* Maskers, *and* Torch-bearers

ROM. What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse?
Or shall we on without apology?

BEN. The date is out of such prolixity:
We'll have no Cupid hoodwink'd with a scarf,
Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,
Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper;
Nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke
After the prompter, for our entrance:

---

105 *county*] a common variant of the title "count." Cf. III, v, 114, "The *County* Paris," III, v, 218, and IV, ii, 29, 45. Paris, at III, iv, 21, *infra*, is called "this noble earl."

3 *The date . . . prolixity*] The time is past for such long-windedness; it is out of fashion.

4 *We'll have no Cupid*] It was customary to introduce a party of masquers at an entertainment by a speech or prologue from one of the youngest of their number, who often personated Cupid. Such an episode figures in *Tim. of Ath.*, I, ii, 117, where Cupid's speech is given. A similar procedure is followed in *L. L. L.*, V, ii, 158–173.

6 *crow-keeper*] scarecrow, keeper-off of crows.

7–8 *Nor no . . . entrance*] These lines only appear in the First Quarto.

7 *without-book prologue*] a prologue learnt by heart.

But, let them measure us by what they will,
We'll measure them a measure, and be gone.
ROM. Give me a torch: I am not for this ambling;
Being but heavy, I will bear the light.
MER. Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.
ROM. Not I, believe me: you have dancing shoes
With nimble soles: I have a soul of lead
So stakes me to the ground, I cannot move.
MER. You are a lover; borrow Cupid's wings,
And soar with them above a common bound.
ROM. I am too sore enpierced with his shaft
To soar with his light feathers, and so bound,
I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe:
Under love's heavy burthen do I sink.
MER. And, to sink in it, should you burthen love;
Too great oppression for a tender thing.
ROM. Is love a tender thing? it is too rough,
Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn.
MER. If love be rough with you, be rough with love;
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.
Give me a case to put my visage in:
A visor for a visor! what care I
What curious eye doth quote deformities?
Here are the beetle-brows shall blush for me.
BEN. Come, knock and enter, and no sooner in
But every man betake him to his legs.
ROM. A torch for me: let wantons light of heart

11 *Give me a torch*] Torch-bearers always accompanied a party of masquers, who performed by night.
21 *pitch*] technically a falcon's flight in hawking.

Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels;
For I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase;
I'll be a candle-holder, and look on.
The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.
MER. Tut, dun 's the mouse, the constable's own word.
If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire 41
Of this sir-reverence love, wherein thou stick'st
Up to the ears. Come, we burn daylight, ho.

36 *rushes*] The floors of houses were ordinarily covered with rushes in lieu of carpets.

37–39 *For I am proverb'd . . . I am done*] Romeo applies to his own case the old proverb "The looker on sees most of the game." This he caps with a variant of another familiar adage, "Stop when the play is at its best." *Candle-holder* is often used in the sense of idle spectator.

40 *dun 's the mouse*] Mercutio is punning on the word "done" (line 39), and lightly quotes this catch-phrase which seems to have meant, "There is no harm done." Cf. *Patient Grissel* (1603): "*dun is the mouse;* lie still." There is no quite satisfactory explanation of the origin of the phrase. It may be that, since the dun-coloured mouse is invisible in the dark, the words imply that nothing can be detected, "all is safe." Cf. the similar cant phrase, *Lear*, III, vi, 45: "Pur! the cat is *gray*." "The constable's own word" is Mercutio's humorous attestation of his veracity.

41 *thou art dun . . . mire*] an allusion to another very common cant phrase, "dun is in the mire," which was also the name of a popular tune. The expression is said to be drawn from a rustic game, in which a heavy log of wood, pretended to be a dun horse, was stuck deep in mud, and the players were challenged to lift it from its place, the attempt justifying much rough-and-tumble merriment. "To draw a dun out of the mire" often meant to get a person out of a ticklish situation.

42 *sir-reverence*] indecorous. Usually an apologetic ejaculation before

ROM. Nay, that's not so.
MER. I mean, sir, in delay
We waste our lights in vain, like lamps by day.
Take our good meaning, for our judgement sits
Five times in that ere once in our five wits.
ROM. And we mean well, in going to this mask;
But 't is no wit to go.
MER. Why, may one ask?
ROM. I dreamt a dream to-night.
MER. And so did I.
ROM. Well, what was yours?
MER. That dreamers often lie.
ROM. In bed asleep, while they do dream things true.
MER. O, then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you.

some indecorum of speech. It is a corruption of the Latin phrase "salvâ reverentiâ," *i. e.*, saving your reverence.

45 *like lamps by day*] Thus the First Quarto. The other Quartos and the Folios read *lights, lights by day*, for which Capell first substituted the reading of the First Quarto. On the other hand, that edition makes the first part of the line run nonsensically *We burne our lights by night.*

47 *Five times . . . five wits*] Mercutio means that there is far more "judgment" or wisdom in his "good meaning" than in all the intellectual faculties put together. The "wits" were by analogy to the five senses reckoned to be five in number, viz.: common-sense, imagination, fancy, judgment, and memory.

53 *Mab*] Shakespeare seems to be the first to give this name to the Queen of the Fairies. The word "Mab" is Celtic, and in Welsh means "a child." "Mabh" is said to be applied to a chief of the fairies in Irish folklore.

She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep:
Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs;
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
Her traces, of the smallest spider's web;
Her collars, of the moonshine's watery beams;
Her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash, of film;
Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid:
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight;
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees;
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,

---

54 *the fairies' midwife*] midwife of the fairy world, whose special function it was to deliver the brains of sleeping men of their dreams.

55 *In shape . . . agate-stone*] Little figures were often cut in relief on agate stones set in rings. Cf. *2 Hen. IV*, I, ii, 16, where Falstaff calls the page an "agate."

57 *atomies*] creatures tiny as atoms.

59 *spinners*] spiders.

65–66 *little worm . . . maid*] It was commonly said that worms bred in idle fingers, the warning often cited by way of promoting industry.

Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are:
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;
And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail
Tickling a parson's nose as a' lies asleep,
Then dreams he of another benefice:
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,
And being thus frighted swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab
That plats the manes of horses in the night,
And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,
Which once untangled much misfortune bodes:
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage:
This is she —

ROM. Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace!
Thou talk'st of nothing.

MER. True, I talk of dreams;
Which are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy,
Which is as thin of substance as the air,

78 *a suit*] a courtier's solicitation of office.

90 *bakes . . . hairs*] clots the hair in dirty and slovenly coils. Dirty matted or knotted hair was commonly called "elf-locks." Cf. *Lear*, II, iii, 10: "*elf* all my hair in knots."

And more inconstant than the wind, who wooes
Even now the frozen bosom of the north,
And, being anger'd, puffs away from thence,
Turning his face to the dew-dropping south.
BEN. This wind you talk of blows us from ourselves;
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.
ROM. I fear, too early: for my mind misgives
Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night's revels, and expire the term
Of a despised life closed in my breast,
By some vile forfeit of untimely death:
But He, that hath the steerage of my course,
Direct my sail! On, lusty gentlemen.
BEN. Strike, drum. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE V — A HALL IN CAPULET'S HOUSE

Musicians *waiting.* *Enter* Servingmen, *with napkins*

FIRST SERV. Where's Potpan, that he helps not to take away? he shift a trencher! he scrape a trencher!
SEC. SERV. When good manners shall lie all in one

103 *his face*] Thus the First Quarto. The other early editions read *his side.*
*dew-dropping south*] Cf. *As you like it,* III, v, 50: "foggy *south,* puffing with wind and rain."
109 *expire*] cause to expire, end.
113 *sail*] Thus the First Quarto. The other early editions read *sute* (*i. e.,* suit, courtship).

or two men's hands, and they unwashed too, 't is a foul thing.

FIRST SERV. Away with the joint-stools, remove the court-cupboard, look to the plate. Good thou, save me a piece of marchpane; and, as thou lovest me, let the porter let in Susan Grindstone and Nell. Antony, and Potpan!

SEC. SERV. Ay, boy, ready.

FIRST SERV. You are looked for and called for, asked for and sought for, in the great chamber.

THIRD SERV. We cannot be here and there too. Cheerly, boys; be brisk a while, and the longer liver take all. [*They retire behind.*

*Enter* CAPULET, *with* JULIET *and others of his house, meeting the* Guests *and* Maskers

CAP. Welcome, gentlemen! ladies that have their toes
Unplagued with corns will have a bout with you:
Ah ha, my mistresses! which of you all
Will now deny to dance? she that makes dainty,
She, I'll swear, hath corns; am I come near ye now?
Welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day
That I have worn a visor, and could tell
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,

5 *joint-stools*] folding chairs.

6 *court-cupboard*] a movable open sideboard, on which plate was exhibited during a feast.

7 *marchpane*] a sweet-scented cake, made of almonds and other nuts, commonly served at dessert.

Such as would please: 't is gone, 't is gone, 't is gone:
You are welcome, gentlemen! Come, musicians, play.
A hall, a hall! give room! and foot it, girls.
[*Music plays, and they dance.*
More light, you knaves; and turn the tables up,
And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot.
Ah, sirrah, this unlook'd-for sport comes well.
Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet;
For you and I are past our dancing days:
How long is 't now since last yourself and I
Were in a mask?

SEC. CAP. By 'r lady, thirty years.

CAP. What, man! 't is not so much, 't is not so much:
'T is since the nuptial of Lucentio,
Come Pentecost as quickly as it will,
Some five and twenty years; and then we mask'd.

SEC. CAP. 'T is more, 't is more: his son is elder, sir;
His son is thirty.

CAP. Will you tell me that?
His son was but a ward two years ago.

ROM. [*To a Servingman*] What lady's that, which doth enrich the hand
Of yonder knight?

SERV. I know not, sir.

---

24 *A hall, a hall!*] A common exclamation for "make room!" "clear a space!" — like the modern "a ring, a ring!"

25 *turn the tables up*] Capulet orders the turning up of the table flaps, which are made in modern tables to let down.

28 *good cousin Capulet*] Capulet is doubtless addressing "prince Capulet's uncle," who is on the list of his guests, already given. Cf. I, ii, 66, *supra*. "Cousin" was commonly used for "kinsman."

ROM. O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear;
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.
The measure done, I 'll watch her place of stand,
And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.
Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.
TYB. This, by his voice, should be a Montague.
Fetch me my rapier, boy. What dares the slave
Come hither, cover'd with an antic face,
To fleer and scorn at our solemnity?
Now, by the stock and honour of my kin,
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.
CAP. Why, how now, kinsman! wherefore storm you so?
TYB. Uncle, this is a Montague, our foe;
A villain, that is hither come in spite,
To scorn at our solemnity this night.
CAP. Young Romeo is it?
TYB. 'T is he, that villain Romeo.
CAP. Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone,
He bears him like a portly gentleman;
And, to say truth, Verona brags of him
To be a virtuous and well-govern'd youth:

54 *antic*] Romeo is wearing a mask; "antic" here means "grotesque."
55 *To fleer . . . solemnity*] To laugh sneeringly and mock at our festivity.
64 *a portly gentleman*] a gentleman of good carriage.

I would not for the wealth of all this town
Here in my house do him disparagement:
Therefore be patient, take no note of him:
It is my will, the which if thou respect,
Show a fair presence and put off these frowns,
An ill-beseeming semblance for a feast.
TYB. It fits, when such a villain is a guest:
I 'll not endure him.
CAP. He shall be endured:
What, goodman boy! I say, he shall: go to;
Am I the master here, or you? go to.
You 'll not endure him! God shall mend my soul,
You 'll make a mutiny among my guests!
You will set cock-a-hoop! you 'll be the man!
TYB. Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.
CAP. Go to, go to;
You are a saucy boy: is 't so, indeed?
This trick may chance to scathe you, I know what:
You must contrary me! marry, 'tis time.
Well said, my hearts! You are a princox; go:
Be quiet, or — More light, more light! For shame!
I 'll make you quiet. What, cheerly, my hearts!
TYB. Patience perforce with wilful choler meeting

79 *set cock-a-hoop*] make a disturbance. Cotgrave, *Fr. Engl. Dict.*, gives as a synonym "to throw the house out at windows." Although the derivation is doubtful, the phrase may refer to the whooping or crowing of a cock when showing fight.

82 *to scathe you*] to injure you.

84 *a princox*] an insolent boy.

87 *Patience perforce*] Enforced patience. Cf. the old proverb "*Patience perforce* is a medicine for a mad dog."

Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.
I will withdraw: but this intrusion shall,
Now seeming sweet, convert to bitterest gall. [*Exit.* 90

ROM. [*To Juliet*] If I profane with my unworthiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this,
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

JUL. Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,
Which mannerly devotion shows in this;
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

ROM. Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

JUL. Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

ROM. O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do; 101
They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

JUL. Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

---

89–90 *this intrusion . . . gall*] Though the old editions, as here, place *Now seeming sweet* between commas, better sense is obtained if those stops be deleted, and *Now seeming sweet* be regarded as the object of *convert*. The meaning would then be "this intrusion shall convert what now seems sweet to bitterest gall." "Convert" is rarely used intransitively.

91–104 *If I profane . . . effect I take*] This passage forms a sonnet. Cf. *L. L. L.*, I, i, 80–93.

92 *fine*] Theobald's emendation of the original reading *sin*.

103–104 *prayers' . . . prayer's*] In the first instance the word is used dissyllabically, and in the second instance monosyllabically.

ROM. Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.
Thus from my lips by thine my sin is purged.
[*Kissing her.*
JUL. Then have my lips the sin that they have took.
ROM. Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urged!
Give me my sin again.
JUL. You kiss by the book.
NURSE. Madam, your mother craves a word with you.
ROM. What is her mother?
NURSE. Marry, bachelor,
Her mother is the lady of the house,
And a good lady, and a wise and virtuous:
I nursed her daughter, that you talk'd withal;
I tell you, he that can lay hold of her
Shall have the chinks.
ROM. Is she a Capulet?
O dear account! my life is my foe's debt.
BEN. Away, be gone; the sport is at the best.
ROM. Ay, so I fear; the more is my unrest.
CAP. Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone;
We have a trifling foolish banquet towards.
Is it e'en so? why, then, I thank you all;
I thank you, honest gentlemen; good night.
More torches here! Come on then, let's to bed.

108 *by the book*] by rule, methodically.
115 *the chinks*] a colloquialism, which is still in use, for coin, money.
116 *my life . . . debt*] my life is at the mercy of my foe.
117 *the sport . . . best*] the best of the sport is over. Cf. I, iv, 39, *supra.*
120 *a . . . banquet towards*] a . . . dessert ready, at hand.

Ah, sirrah, by my fay, it waxes late:
I'll to my rest. [*Exeunt all but Juliet and Nurse.*
JUL. Come hither, nurse. What is yond gentleman?
NURSE. The son and heir of old Tiberio.
JUL. What's he that now is going out of door?
NURSE. Marry, that, I think, be young Petruchio.
JUL. What's he that follows there, that would not dance?
NURSE. I know not.
JUL. Go ask his name. If he be married,
My grave is like to be my wedding bed.
NURSE. His name is Romeo, and a Montague,
The only son of your great enemy.
JUL. My only love sprung from my only hate!
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
Prodigious birth of love it is to me,
That I must love a loathed enemy.
NURSE. What's this? what's this?
JUL. A rhyme I learn'd even now
Of one I danced withal. [*One calls within* "Juliet."
NURSE. Anon, anon!
Come, let's away; the strangers all are gone. [*Exeunt.*

---

124 *by my fay*] by my faith.

## ACT SECOND — PROLOGUE

*Enter* Chorus

CHORUS

NOW OLD DESIRE DOTH IN his death-bed lie,
And young affection gapes to be his heir;
That fair for which love groan'd for and would die,
With tender Juliet match'd, is now not fair.
Now Romeo is beloved and loves again,
Alike bewitched by the charm of looks,
But to his foe supposed he must complain,
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks:
Being held a foe, he may not have access

PROLOGUE] See note on Act I, Prologue, 1–14.

2 *gapes*] yearns, longs.

3 *That fair*] That beauty. The second "for" in this line is redundant.

To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear;
And she as much in love, her means much less
To meet her new beloved any where:
But passion lends them power, time means, to meet,
Tempering extremities with extreme sweet. [*Exit.*

## SCENE I—A LANE BY THE WALL OF CAPULET'S ORCHARD

*Enter* ROMEO, *alone*

ROM. Can I go forward when my heart is here?
Turn back, dull earth, and find thy centre out.
[*He climbs the wall, and leaps down within it.*

*Enter* BENVOLIO *with* MERCUTIO

BEN. Romeo! my cousin Romeo!
MER. He is wise;
And, on my life, hath stol'n him home to bed.
BEN. He ran this way, and leap'd this orchard wall:
Call, good Mercutio.
MER. Nay, I'll conjure too.
Romeo! humours! madman! passion! lover!
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh:
Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied;

14 *Tempering . . . sweet*] Compensating for the extremity of the perils with the acme of pleasure.

2 *dull earth*] the earthlier portion of Romeo's being, of which the "centre" is his soul. Cf. *Sonnet* cxlvi, 1: "Poor *soul*, the *centre* of this sinful *earth*," and I, ii, 15, *supra*, and note.

7 *humours*] whimsical fancies.

Cry but "ay me!" pronounce but "love" and "dove;"
Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,
One nick-name for her purblind son and heir,
Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim
When King Cophetua loved the beggar-maid!
He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not;
The ape is dead, and I must conjure him.
I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,
By her fine foot, straight leg and quivering thigh,
And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,
That in thy likeness thou appear to us!

BEN. An if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.

MER. This cannot anger him: 't would anger him

11 *gossip*] crony.

13 *Young Adam Cupid*] *Adam* is Upton's emendation of the old reading *Abraham*. The change is supported by *Much Ado*, I, i, 223–224: "he that hits me let him be . . . called *Adam*" (*i. e.*, a model marksman), in reference to the famous archer of ballad tradition, Adam Bell. *Abraham* is sometimes justified on the ground that the word was both used for the colour of "auburn" or "flaxen" hair, and was also applied to a beggarman. Both meanings might conceivably fit Cupid, but neither is relevant to the marksmanship with which he is credited here. *Adam* is probably the right reading.

*trim*] Thus the First Quarto. The other early editions read *true*. But the words here are a quotation from the popular ballad of King Cophetua and the beggar-maid mentioned in the next line. That ballad has a stanza beginning with the line "The blinded boy that *shoots so trim*."

14 *King Cophetua . . . beggar-maid*] Shakespeare again refers to the popular ballad on this old tale in *L. L. L.*, I, ii, 106, IV, i, 64, and *2 Hen. IV*, V, iii, 106.

16 *The ape*] The poor fool; often used with a tender meaning.

To raise a spirit in his mistress' circle
Of some strange nature, letting it there stand
Till she had laid it and conjured it down;
That were some spite: my invocation
Is fair and honest, and in his mistress' name
I conjure only to but raise up him.

BEN. Come, he hath hid himself among these trees,
To be consorted with the humorous night:
Blind is his love, and best befits the dark.

MER. If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.
Now will he sit under a medlar-tree,
And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit
As maids call medlars when they laugh alone.
O, Romeo, that she were, O, that she were
An open et cetera, thou a poperin pear!
Romeo, good night: I'll to my truckle-bed;
This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep:
Come, shall we go?

BEN. Go then, for 't is in vain
To seek him here that means not to be found. [*Exeunt.*

---

31 *humorous*] humid, moist, with a play on the ordinary sense of "capricious."

38 *a poperin pear*] a pear brought to England from Popering, a town in Flanders, near Ypres. It was not reckoned of much account. Mercutio is indulging here in much indelicate quibbling.

39 *truckle-bed*] a bed on casters, ordinarily used by a page or servant, and kept by day beneath the bigger bed, used by the master. "Trundle-bed" is a common variant.

40 *field-bed*] couch in the open air.

## SCENE II — CAPULET'S ORCHARD

*Enter* ROMEO

ROM. He jests at scars that never felt a wound.
[*Juliet appears above at a window.*
But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.
It is my lady; O, it is my love!
O, that she knew she were!
She speaks, yet she says nothing: what of that?
Her eye discourses, I will answer it.
I am too bold, 't is not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do intreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven

1 *He jests . . . wound*] Romeo has overheard Mercutio's badinage.
7 *Be not her maid*] Be not votary of the moon, *i. e.*, the chaste Diana.
8 *sick and green*] pale and of an unhealthy hue. There is a reference to the green sickness, an anæmic malady of young girls.
9 *none but fools*] Professional fools wore at court a livery of white and green.

Would through the airy region stream so bright
That birds would sing and think it were not night.
See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

JUL. Ay me!

ROM. She speaks:
O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
As is a winged messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturned wondering eyes
Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him,
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

JUL. O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father and refuse thy name;
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

ROM. [*Aside*] Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

JUL. 'T is but thy name that is my enemy;
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
What's in a name? that which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet;
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,

39 *though not a Montague*] though thou hadst not the name Montague, whatever the name thou mightest bear.

Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,
And for thy name, which is no part of thee,
Take all myself.
ROM. I take thee at thy word:
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.
JUL. What man art thou, that, thus bescreen'd in night,
So stumblest on my counsel?
ROM. By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am:
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,
Because it is an enemy to thee;
Had I it written, I would tear the word.
JUL. My ears have yet not drunk a hundred words
Of thy tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound:
Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?
ROM. Neither, fair maid, if either thee dislike.
JUL. How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.
ROM. With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls,
For stony limits cannot hold love out:
And what love can do, that dares love attempt;
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

46 *owes*] owns.
61 *dislike*] displease.
69 *no let*] no hindrance.

JUL. If they do see thee, they will murder thee.
ROM. Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye
Than twenty of their swords: look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity.
JUL. I would not for the world they saw thee here.
ROM. I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes;
And but thou love me, let them find me here:
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.
JUL. By whose direction found'st thou out this place?
ROM. By love, that first did prompt me to inquire;
He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.
JUL. Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke: but farewell compliment!
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say "Ay,"
And I will take thy word: yet, if thou swear'st,
Thou mayst prove false: at lovers' perjuries,
They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,

78 *prorogued*] postponed.
88 *dwell on form*] observe etiquette.
92–93 *at lovers' perjuries . . . laughs*] Thus Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, i, 633: "*Jupiter ex alto perjuria ridet amantum*," which Marlowe translated thus: "For Jove himself sits in the azure skies And *laughs below at lovers' perjuries.*"

If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond;
And therefore thou mayst think my 'haviour light:
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,
My true love's passion: therefore pardon me,
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discovered.
ROM. Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear,
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops, —
JUL. O, swear not by the moon, th' inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.
ROM. What shall I swear by?
JUL. Do not swear at all;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.
ROM. If my heart's dear love —
JUL. Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract to-night:

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101 *strange*] distant, coy. Cf. III, ii, 15, *infra*, "*strange* love."

109 *O, swear not . . . moon*] Cf. Ronsard's *Sonnets pour Hélène*, XV, i, 2: "Je ne veux comparer tes beautez à la lune: *La lune est inconstante*, et ton vouloir n'est qu'un."

It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden,
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say "It lightens." Sweet, good night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!
ROM. O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?
JUL. What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?
ROM. The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.
JUL. I gave thee mine before thou didst request it:
And yet I would it were to give again.
ROM. Wouldst thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?
JUL. But to be frank, and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have:
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.
I hear some noise within; dear love, adieu!
[*Nurse calls within.*
Anon, good nurse! Sweet Montague, be true.
Stay but a little, I will come again. [*Exit.*
ROM. O blessed, blessed night! I am afeard,
Being in night, all this is but a dream,
Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

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124 *as that . . . breast*] as that (repose and rest) which are in my breast.
131 *frank*] bountiful. Cf. *Sonnet* iv, 4: "being *frank*, she [*i. e.*, Nature] lends to those are free."

*Re-enter* JULIET, *above*

JUL. Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.
If that thy bent of love be honourable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,
By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite,
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,
And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

NURSE. [*Within*] Madam!

JUL. I come, anon. — But if thou mean'st not well, 150
I do beseech thee —

NURSE. [*Within*] Madam!

JUL. By and by, I come: —
To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief:
To-morrow will I send.

ROM. So thrive my soul, —

JUL. A thousand times good night! [*Exit.*

ROM. A thousand times the worse, to want thy light.
Love goes toward love, as schoolboys from their books,
But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.
[*Retiring slowly.*

*Re-enter* JULIET, *above*

JUL. Hist! Romeo, hist! — O, for a falconer's voice,
To lure this tassel-gentle back again!

151 *By and by*] This moment, immediately. Cf. III, i, 167, III, iii, 76, V, iii, 283, *infra.*

152 *To cease thy suit*] Thus the Fourth and Fifth Quartos. The other early editions read *strife* for *suit.* The words *To cease thy suit* figure in Brooke's Poem.

Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;
Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine,
With repetition of my Romeo's name.
Romeo!

ROM. It is my soul that calls upon my name:
How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,
Like softest music to attending ears!

JUL. Romeo!

ROM. My dear?

JUL. At what o'clock to-morrow
Shall I send to thee?

ROM. At the hour of nine.

JUL. I will not fail: 't is twenty years till then.
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

ROM. Let me stand here till thou remember it.

JUL. I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
Remembering how I love thy company.

ROM. And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,
Forgetting any other home but this.

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159 *tassel-gentle*] The word is more often found in the form *tercel-gentle*, the male of the goshawk. The bird, which was credited with a gentle disposition, was held in the highest esteem among falconers.

161 *I tear the cave*]. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, i, 542. "A shout that *tore* Hell's *concave*."

164 *Romeo!*] Thus the First Quarto. The word is omitted by the other early editions.

168 *My dear?*] Thus the Fourth and Fifth Quartos. The First reads *Madam*. The Second and Third Quartos, like the First Folio, have *My niece*. *My sweet*, which is the reading of the Second and later Folios, is perhaps better than any other.

JUL. 'T is almost morning; I would have thee gone:
And yet no farther than a wanton's bird,
Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,
And with a silk thread plucks it back again,
So loving-jealous of his liberty.
ROM. I would I were thy bird.
JUL. Sweet, so would I:
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
Good night, good night! parting is such sweet sorrow
That I shall say good night till it be morrow. [*Exit.*
ROM. Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!
Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!
Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell,
His help to crave and my dear hap to tell. [*Exit.*

## SCENE III — FRIAR LAURENCE'S CELL

*Enter* FRIAR LAURENCE, *with a basket*

FRI. L. The grey-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,
Chequering the eastern clouds with streaks of light;

178 *a wanton's bird*] a bird belonging to a thoughtless child.
189 *ghostly father*] spiritual father confessor. So, again, II, iii, 45. Cf. "*ghostly* confessor," II, vi, 21, and III, iii, 49, *infra*.
1 *grey-eyed morn*] a reference to the bluish grey colour of the sky after dawn.

And flecked darkness like a drunkard reels
From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels:
Now, ere the sun advance his burning eye,
The day to cheer and night's dank dew to dry,
I must up-fill this osier cage of ours
With baleful weeds and precious-juiced flowers.
The earth that 's nature's mother is her tomb;
What is her burying grave, that is her womb:
And from her womb children of divers kind
We sucking on her natural bosom find,
Many for many virtues excellent,
None but for some, and yet all different.
O, mickle is the powerful grace that lies
In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities:
For nought so vile that on the earth doth live,
But to the earth some special good doth give;
Nor aught so good, but, strain'd from that fair use,
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied,
And vice sometime 's by action dignified.
Within the infant rind of this small flower
Poison hath residence, and medicine power:
For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part,

3 *flecked*] dabbled, streaked with light.

4 *Titan's fiery wheels*] Shakespeare follows Ovid in frequently calling the sun "Titan." Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, II, iv, 114.

7 *this osier cage*] the basket belonging to the monastery in which the friar collects medicinal simples.

15 *mickle . . . grace*] great is the efficacious virtue.

23 *small*] Thus the First Quarto. The other early editions read *weake.*

25 *with that part*] with its odour-giving faculty.

Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.
Two such opposed kings encamp them still
In man as well as herbs, grace and rude will;
And where the worser is predominant,
Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

*Enter* ROMEO

ROM. Good morrow, father.
FRI. L. Benedicite!
What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?
Young son, it argues a distemper'd head
So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed:
Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,
And where care lodges, sleep will never lie;
But where unbruised youth with unstuff'd brain
Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign:
Therefore thy earliness doth me assure
Thou art up-roused by some distemperature;
Or if not so, then here I hit it right,
Our Romeo hath not been in bed to-night.
ROM. That last is true; the sweeter rest was mine.
FRI. L. God pardon sin! wast thou with Rosaline?
ROM. With Rosaline, my ghostly father? no;
I have forgot that name and that name's woe.
FRI. L. That's my good son: but where hast thou been then?
ROM. I'll tell thee ere thou ask it me again.
I have been feasting with mine enemy;

40 *distemperature*] indisposition, illness.

Where on a sudden one hath wounded me,
That's by me wounded: both our remedies
Within thy help and holy physic lies:
I bear no hatred, blessed man, for, lo,
My intercession likewise steads my foe.

FRI. L. Be plain, good son, and homely in thy drift;
Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.

ROM. Then plainly know my heart's dear love is set
On the fair daughter of rich Capulet:
As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine;
And all combined, save what thou must combine
By holy marriage: when, and where, and how,
We met, we woo'd and made exchange of vow,
I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,
That thou consent to marry us to-day.

FRI. L. Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here!
Is Rosaline, that thou didst love so dear,
So soon forsaken? young men's love then lies
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.
Jesu Maria, what a deal of brine
Hath wash'd thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline!
How much salt water thrown away in waste,
To season love, that of it doth not taste!
The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,

51 *both our remedies*] the cure of both of us.

56 *Riddling . . . shrift*] Ambiguity in the confessional only receives ambiguous absolution.

72 *season*] preserve; the common use of salt water.

73 *The sun . . . clears*] Clouds are poetically conceived to be formed of lovers' sighs. Cf. I, i, 188, *supra:* "Love is a smoke raised with the *fume* of *sighs*."

Thy old groans ring yet in mine ancient ears;
Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit
Of an old tear that is not wash'd off yet:
If e'er thou wast thyself and these woes thine,
Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline:
And art thou changed? pronounce this sentence then:
Women may fall when there's no strength in men.
ROM. Thou chid'st me oft for loving Rosaline.
FRI. L. For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.
ROM. And bad'st me bury love.
FRI. L. Not in a grave,
To lay one in, another out to have.
ROM. I pray thee, chide not: she whom I love now
Doth grace for grace and love for love allow;
The other did not so.
FRI. L. O, she knew well
Thy love did read by rote and could not spell.
But come, young waverer, come, go with me,
In one respect I'll thy assistant be;
For this alliance may so happy prove,
To turn your households' rancour to pure love.
ROM. O, let us hence; I stand on sudden haste.
FRI. L. Wisely and slow; they stumble that run fast.
[*Exeunt.*

88 *Thy love . . . could not spell*] Romeo's love for Rosaline was of a mechanical capacity, and had not grasped the full significance of genuine passion.

90 *In one respect*] Because of one consideration.

93 *I stand . . . haste*] It is of importance to me to use extreme speed.

## SCENE IV — A STREET

*Enter* BENVOLIO *and* MERCUTIO

MER. Where the devil should this Romeo be? Came he not home to-night?

BEN. Not to his father's; I spoke with his man.

MER. Ah, that same pale hard-hearted wench, that Rosaline,
Torments him so that he will sure run mad.

BEN. Tybalt, the kinsman to old Capulet,
Hath sent a letter to his father's house.

MER. A challenge, on my life.

BEN. Romeo will answer it.

MER. Any man that can write may answer a letter.

BEN. Nay, he will answer the letter's master, how he dares, being dared.

MER. Alas, poor Romeo, he is already dead! stabbed with a white wench's black eye; shot thorough the ear with a love-song; the very pin of his heart cleft with the blind bow-boy's butt-shaft: and is he a man to encounter Tybalt?

BEN. Why, what is Tybalt?

MER. More than prince of cats, I can tell you. O,

---

15 *the very pin*] The bull's-eye or white mark on the target, at which the arrows were aimed, was fastened in the centre by a black pin.

16 *butt-shaft*] the arrow specially used for shooting at butts. Fashioned without a barb, it could easily be extracted.

19 *prince of cats*] Tibert or Sir Tibert was a colloquial nickname of cats,

he's the courageous captain of compliments. He fights as you sing prick-song, keeps time, distance and proportion; rests me his minim rest, one, two, and the third in your bosom: the very butcher of a silk button, a duellist, a duellist; a gentleman of the very first house, of the first and second cause: ah, the immortal passado! the punto reverso! the hai! 26

BEN. The what?

MER. The pox of such antic, lisping, affecting fantasticoes; these new tuners of accents! "By Jesu, a very good blade! a very tall man! a very good whore!"

---

the cat being so called in the old romance of "Reynard the Fox." Cf. III, i, 73–75, *infra*.

20 *the courageous captain of compliments*] the complete master of etiquette or the laws of the punctilio. *Compliments* is Rowe's alteration of the original reading *complements*. Cf. *L. L. L.*, I, i, 166: "a man of *complements*" [*i. e.*, accomplishments].

21 *prick-song*] written music.

22 *rests me . . . rest*] "me" is the ethic dative; "minim" is a musical note of slow time, equivalent to two crochets.

24 *a gentleman . . . house*] Cotgrave, in his *Fr.-Engl. Dict.*, explains this phrase as "an upstart gentleman." It probably means a man who claims the highest consideration in view of his skill as a swordsman, and will fight on the smallest provocation.

25 *of the first . . . cause*] The etiquette of the duello defined with numerical precision the various grounds or causes which rendered the duel necessary. Cf. *As you like it*, V, iv, 48–49: "we met, and found the quarrel was upon *the seventh cause*."

25–26 *passado . . . punto reverso . . . hai*] forward thrust — back-handed thrust — home thrust. All are technical Italian terms in fencing. Cf. III, i, 72: "Alla stoccata," and 82, "your passado." "Hai" is the Italian for "thou hast [it]."

28 *fantasticoes*] coxcombs.

30 *tall man*] fine fellow.

Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandsire, that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these perdona-mi's, who stand so much on the new form that they cannot sit at ease on the old bench? O, their bones, their bones! 35

*Enter* ROMEO

BEN. Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

MER. Without his roe, like a dried herring: O flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified! Now is he for the numbers

---

31 *grandsire*] Mercutio playfully apostrophises his ancestors, who knew nothing of these modern fopperies.

32 *these strange flies*] Cf. *Hamlet*, V, ii, 83, where the coxcomb Osric is called a "waterfly."

33 *perdona-mi's*] Most of the early editions read substantially *pardon mees*. The Fourth and Fifth Quartos, however, substitute *pardona-mees*, which the Cambridge editors translate into Italian. Theobald read *pardonnez-moy's*. But the English form *pardon-mes* has the best textual authority, although one might expect the affected coxcombs to clothe their apologetic catchphrase in a foreign tongue.

*stand*] insist.

35 *bones, their bones*] Thus all the early editions, for which Theobald substituted *bon's, their bon's*, thinking Mercutio to ridicule the gallants' use of the French exclamation, "bon!" But Mercutio may only be thinking of the contortions of their limbs incident to their affected gestures, especially if they were to sit "on the old bench."

37 *his roe*] The frivolous pun revolves about "roe" in the sense of the female deer.

38–41 *the numbers . . . be-rhyme her*] This is the sole reference that Shakespeare makes to the predominant influence which Petrarch's famous sonnets to Laura exerted on Elizabethan sonneteers. See introduction to *Elizabethan Sonnets*, 1904, ed. by Sidney Lee.

that Petrarch flowed in: Laura to his lady was but a kitchen-wench; marry, she had a better love to be-rhyme her; Dido, a dowdy; Cleopatra, a gypsy; Helen and Hero, hildings and harlots; Thisbe, a grey eye or so, but not to the purpose. Signior Romeo, bon jour! there's a French salutation to your French slop. You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

ROM. Good morrow to you both. What counterfeit did I give you?

MER. The slip, sir, the slip; can you not conceive?

ROM. Pardon, good Mercutio, my business was great; and in such a case as mine a man may strain courtesy.

MER. That's as much as to say, Such a case as yours constrains a man to bow in the hams.

ROM. Meaning, to court'sy.

MER. Thou hast most kindly hit it.

ROM. A most courteous exposition.

MER. Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

---

42 *hildings*] menial scullions. Cf. III, v, 168, *infra*.

*Thisbe*] the heroine of one of Ovid's love stories in his *Metamorphoses*, iv, 55–166. Her story is parodied by Bottom and his associates in *Mids. N. Dr.* She is again cited as a notable type of lover in *Merch. of Ven.*, V, i, 7.

*a grey eye*] a bright blue eye. Shakespeare only used the term "blue eye" in the sense of an eye ringed with blackish blue skin. Cf. *As you like it*, III, ii, 346: "a *blue eye* and sunken."

44 *French slop*] fashionable breeches made wide and loose after a pattern borrowed from France.

45–48 *the counterfeit . . . the slip*] a base or counterfeit coin of small value was colloquially called at will both a "counterfeit" and a "slip." "Counterfeit" is often used punningly, as here in the sense of "slip" (*i. e.*, a hurried clandestine flight).

ROM. Pink for flower.

MER. Right.

ROM. Why, then is my pump well flowered. 59

MER. Well said: follow me this jest now, till thou hast worn out thy pump, that, when a single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain, after the wearing, solely singular.

ROM. O single-soled jest, solely singular for the singleness! 65

MER. Come between us, good Benvolio; my wits faint.

ROM. Switch and spurs, switch and spurs; or I'll cry a match.

MER. Nay, if thy wits run the wild-goose chase, I have done; for thou hast more of the wild-goose in one of thy wits than, I am sure, I have in my whole five: was I with you there for the goose? 72

---

59 *then is my pump well flowered*] Romeo is feebly punning on the circumstance that the front of his shoe or pump was, in accordance with common fashion, pinked (*i. e.*, punctured with small holes) in the pattern of a flower. If the word "pink" means a flower (line 57), then a pinked shoe is a flowered shoe. The quibbling also implies a reference to the occasional custom of fastening rosettes or roses on shoes.

64 *single-soled*] commonly used in the sense of "slight," "feeble." Cotgrave gives the expression the meaning of threadbare.
*singleness*] smallness, feebleness.

69 *wild-goose chase*] a race between two riders in which the one who falls behind has to pursue his leader whithersoever he go, until he pass him. Cf. Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. 1632, p. 266: "Horse races, *wild-goose chases* are the disports of great men."

72 *was I with you . . . goose?*] was I a match for you, with my quip about the goose?

ROM. Thou wast never with me for any thing when thou wast not there for the goose.

MER. I will bite thee by the ear for that jest.

ROM. Nay, good goose, bite not.

MER. Thy wit is a very bitter sweeting; it is a most sharp sauce.

ROM. And is it not well served in to a sweet goose?

MER. O, here's a wit of cheveril, that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell broad! 81

ROM. I stretch it out for that word "broad;" which added to the goose, proves thee far and wide a broad goose.

MER. Why, is not this better now than groaning for love? now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature: for this drivelling love is like a great natural, that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole.

BEN. Stop there, stop there. 90

---

76 *good goose, bite not*] a proverbial phrase.

77 *bitter sweeting*] a species of apple of sharp taste, used for apple sauce for a goose.

80 *wit of cheveril*] Cf. *Tw. Night*, III, i, 10–11: "A sentence is but a *cheveril* [*i. e.*, kid leather] glove to a good wit."

83–84 *a broad goose*] a great goose; possibly a pun on "broad" and "brood." Thus the Quartos and the Fourth Folio. The earlier Folios read *abroad goose*, which may mean "goose everywhere." The quibbling is too strained to be keenly pointed.

88 *natural*] idiot.

89 *bauble*] a short stick carried by the professional fool, with a doll's head at one end.

MER. Thou desirest me to stop in my tale against the hair.

BEN. Thou wouldst else have made thy tale large.

MER. O, thou art deceived; I would have made it short: for I was come to the whole depth of my tale, and meant indeed to occupy the argument no longer.

ROM. Here's goodly gear!

*Enter* Nurse *and* PETER

MER. A sail, a sail!

BEN. Two, two; a shirt and a smock.

NURSE. Peter!

PETER. Anon?

NURSE. My fan, Peter.

MER. Good Peter, to hide her face; for her fan's the fairer of the two.

NURSE. God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

MER. God ye good den, fair gentlewoman.

NURSE. Is it good den?

MER. 'T is no less, I tell you; for the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.

NURSE. Out upon you! what a man are you!

ROM. One, gentlewoman, that God hath made himself to mar.

NURSE. By my troth, it is well said; "for himself to

---

91–92 *against the hair*] against the grain.

93 *large*] licentious. Cf. *Much Ado*, II, iii, 181: "*large* jests."

97 *goodly gear*] fine stuff; Romeo catches sight of the nurse and Peter.

106 *God ye good den*] God give you good evening. Cf. III, i, 37, *infra*.

109 *the prick of noon*] the mark of noon on the face of the dial. Cf. *3 Hen. VI*, I, iv, 34: "the noontide *prick*."

mar," quoth a'? Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I may find the young Romeo?

ROM. I can tell you; but young Romeo will be older when you have found him than he was when you sought him: I am the youngest of that name, for fault of a worse.

NURSE. You say well.

MER. Yea, is the worst well? very well took, i' faith; wisely, wisely.

NURSE. If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence with you.

BEN. She will indite him to some supper.

MER. A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! So ho!

ROM. What hast thou found?

MER. No hare, sir; unless a hare, sir, in a lenten pie, that is something stale and hoar ere it be spent. [*Sings.*

An old hare hoar,
And an old hare hoar,
Is very good meat in lent:
But a hare that is hoar,
Is too much for a score,
When it hoars ere it be spent.

Romeo, will you come to your father's? we'll to dinner thither.

ROM. I will follow you.

123 *confidence*] a blunder for "conference."
124 *indite*] a sarcastic perversion of "invite."
126 *So ho!*] the sportsman's cry on finding a hare.
128 *a hare*] a pun on the word in the colloquial sense of courtesan.
129 *hoar*] white with mould, mouldy.

MER. Farewell, ancient lady; farewell, [*singing*] "lady, lady, lady." [*Exeunt Mercutio and Benvolio.* 140

NURSE. Marry, farewell! I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this, that was so full of his ropery?

ROM. A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk, and will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month.

NURSE. An a' speak any thing against me, I'll take him down, an a' were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks; and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirt-gills; I am none of his skains-mates. [*Turning to Peter*] And thou must stand by too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?

---

139–140 "*lady, lady, lady*"] a tag from a popular contemporary ballad of *Constant Susanna*, which is quoted by Sir Toby Belch in *Tw. Night*, II, iii, 76, and also by Sir Hugh Evans, in *M. Wives*, III, i, 22.

142 *merchant*] fellow; "chap," an abbreviated form of "chapman," is similarly used.

*ropery*] roguery, ribaldry. Cf. *T. of Shrew*, I, ii, 109–110: "*rope*-tricks."

144 *stand to*] make good.

149 *flirt-gills*] flirts, women of loose behaviour; "gill" is a variant spelling of "jill," a term colloquially applied to a woman, as "Jack" is to a man. Cf. line 147, *supra*, "twenty such Jacks," and III, i, 11, *infra*.

150 *skains-mates*] The word is unknown elsewhere in literature, though Staunton says he heard it used in Kent in the sense of "scape-graces." It may be a malapropism for something like "stale-mates." Cf. *T. of Shrew*, I, i, 58: "Is it your will to make a *stale* of me among these *mates?*" Some editors, on the other hand, believe the word to be formed from "skeins" and "mates," and to mean women engaged in weaving skeins of wool or silk [*i. e.*, work-girls].

PET. I saw no man use you at his pleasure; if I had, my weapon should quickly have been out, I warrant you: I dare draw as soon as another man, if I see occasion in a good quarrel and the law on my side.

NURSE. Now, afore God, I am so vexed that every part about me quivers. Scurvy knave! Pray you, sir, a word: and as I told you, my young lady bade me inquire you out; what she bade me say, I will keep to myself: but first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her into a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behaviour, as they say: for the gentlewoman is young, and therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.

ROM. Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress. I protest unto thee —

NURSE. Good heart, and, i' faith, I will tell her as much: Lord, Lord, she will be a joyful woman.

ROM. What wilt thou tell her, nurse? thou dost not mark me.

NURSE. I will tell her, sir, that you do protest; which, as I take it, is a gentlemanlike offer.

ROM. Bid her devise
Some means to come to shrift this afternoon;
And there she shall at Friar Laurence' cell
Be shrived and married. Here is for thy pains.

NURSE. No, truly, sir; not a penny.

ROM. Go to; I say you shall.

NURSE. This afternoon, sir? well, she shall be there.

165 *weak dealing*] the nurse's misrendering of "wicked dealing."

ROM. And stay, good nurse, behind the abbey-wall:
Within this hour my man shall be with thee,
And bring thee cords made like a tackled stair;
Which to the high top-gallant of my joy
Must be my convoy in the secret night.
Farewell; be trusty, and I 'll quit thy pains:
Farewell; commend me to thy mistress.

NURSE. Now God in heaven bless thee! Hark you, sir.

ROM. What say'st thou, my dear nurse?

NURSE. Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear say,
Two may keep counsel, putting one away? 190

ROM. I warrant thee, my man's as true as steel.

NURSE. Well, sir; my mistress is the sweetest lady — Lord, Lord! when 't was a little prating thing — O, there is a nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain lay knife aboard; but she, good soul, had as lieve see a toad, a very toad, as see him. I anger her sometimes, and tell her that Paris is the properer man; but, I 'll warrant you, when I say so, she looks as pale as any clout in the versal world. Doth not rosemary and Romeo begin both with a letter? 201

ROM. Ay, nurse; what of that? both with an R.

NURSE. Ah, mocker! that's the dog's name; R is for

---

183 *a tackled stair*] a rope ladder; part of a ship's tackle. The word suggests the mention in the next line of "the high top-gallant," *i. e.*, the top-gallant sail above the topsail, the summit, the pinnacle.

200 *clout*] sheet.

*versal*] universal; a colloquial usage.

*rosemary*] the emblem of remembrance. Cf. IV, v, 79, *infra*.

203 *that's the dog's name*] the letter R seems to have been onomatopœically applied to dogs on account of their growl. Cf. Ben Jonson's *Eng-*

the — No; I know it begins with some other letter — and she hath the prettiest sententious of it, of you and rosemary, that it would do you good to hear it.

ROM. Commend me to thy lady.

NURSE. Ay, a thousand times. [*Exit Romeo*] Peter!

PET. Anon?

NURSE. Peter, take my fan, and go before, and apace.

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE V — CAPULET'S ORCHARD

*Enter* JULIET

JUL. The clock struck nine when I did send the nurse;
In half an hour she promised to return.
Perchance she cannot meet him: that's not so.
O, she is lame! love's heralds should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,
Driving back shadows over louring hills:
Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw love,
And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.
Now is the sun upon the highmost hill
Of this day's journey, and from nine till twelve
Is three long hours; yet she is not come.
Had she affections and warm youthful blood,
She would be as swift in motion as a ball;
My words would bandy her to my sweet love,

---

*lish Grammar*: "R is the *dog's letter*, and hurreth in sound." The verb "arre" was in use for "growl."

205 *sententious*] a blunder for "sentences."

14 *bandy*] toss; a term in tennis.

And his to me:
But old folks, many feign as they were dead;
Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.

*Enter* Nurse, *with* PETER

O God, she comes! O honey nurse, what news?
Hast thou met with him? Send thy man away.
NURSE. Peter, stay at the gate. [*Exit Peter.*
JUL. Now, good sweet nurse, — O Lord, why look'st thou sad?
Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;
If good, thou shamest the music of sweet news
By playing it to me with so sour a face.
NURSE. I am a-weary; give me leave a while,
Fie, how my bones ache! what a jaunce have I had!
JUL. I would thou hadst my bones and I thy news:
Nay, come, I pray thee, speak; good, good nurse, speak.
NURSE. Jesu, what haste? can you not stay a while?
Do you not see that I am out of breath?
JUL. How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath
To say to me that thou art out of breath?
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.
Is thy news good, or bad? answer to that;

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26 *jaunce*] Thus the Second and Third Quartos, which also have *jauncing* in line 52. The other early editions read *jaunt* here, and *jaunting* in line 52. The two forms were used indifferently by Elizabethan writers, in the sense of "ramble" or "rush." Cf. *Rich. II*, V, v, 94: "*jauncing* Bolingbroke."

Say either, and I 'll stay the circumstance:
Let me be satisfied, is 't good or bad?

NURSE. Well, you have made a simple choice; you know not how to choose a man: Romeo! no, not he; though his face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all men's; and for a hand, and a foot, and a body, though they be not to be talked on, yet they are past compare: he is not the flower of courtesy, but, I'll warrant him, as gentle as a lamb. Go thy ways, wench; serve God. What, have you dined at home?

JUL. No, no: but all this did I know before.
What says he of our marriage? what of that?

NURSE. Lord, how my head aches! what a head have I!
It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.
My back o' t' other side, — ah, my back, my back!
Beshrew your heart for sending me about,
To catch my death with jauncing up and down!

JUL. I' faith, I am sorry that thou art not well.
Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?

NURSE. Your love says, like an honest gentleman, and a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome, and, I warrant, a virtuous, — Where is your mother?

JUL. Where is my mother! Why, she is within;
Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest!
"Your love says, like an honest gentleman,
Where is your mother?"

36 *stay the circumstance*] wait for the details. Cf. V, iii, 179–180, *infra*, "the true ground . . . we cannot without *circumstance* descry."
38 *simple*] silly.
52 *jauncing*] rushing; see note on line 26, *supra*.

NURSE. O God's lady dear!
Are you so hot? marry, come up, I trow;
Is this the poultice for my aching bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.
JUL. Here's such a coil! come, what says Romeo?
NURSE. Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?
JUL. I have.
NURSE. Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence' cell;
There stays a husband to make you a wife:
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,
They 'll be in scarlet straight at any news.
Hie you to church; I must another way,
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
Must climb a bird's nest soon when it is dark;
I am the drudge, and toil in your delight;
But you shall bear the burthen soon at night.
Go; I'll to dinner; hie you to the cell.
JUL. Hie to high fortune! Honest nurse, farewell.
[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE VI — FRIAR LAURENCE'S CELL

*Enter* FRIAR LAURENCE *and* ROMEO

FRI. L. So smile the heavens upon this holy act
That after-hours with sorrow chide us not!
ROM. Amen, amen! but come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail the exchange of joy
That one short minute gives me in her sight:

65 *coil*] fuss, ado.

Do thou but close our hands with holy words,
Then love-devouring death do what he dare,
It is enough I may but call her mine.
FRI. L. These violent delights have violent ends,
And in their triumph die; like fire and powder
Which as they kiss consume: the sweetest honey
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness,
And in the taste confounds the appetite:
Therefore, love moderately; long love doth so;
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.

*Enter* JULIET

Here comes the lady. O, so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint.
A lover may bestride the gossamer
That idles in the wanton summer air,
And yet not fall; so light is vanity.
JUL. Good even to my ghostly confessor.
FRI. L. Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us both.
JUL. As much to him, else is his thanks too much.
ROM. Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy
Be heap'd like mine, and that thy skill be more

12 *his own*] its own.
13 *confounds*] destroys.
15 *Too swift . . . too slow*] He who thinks to reach his goal too swiftly falls as far behind as he who travels too slowly. Cf. the proverb "More haste, less speed."
18 *the gossamer*] the floating filaments of cobwebs, or the light down which blows off the thistle.
21 *ghostly confessor*] spiritual minister. Cf. III, iii, 49, *infra*.

To blazon it, then sweeten with thy breath
This neighbour air, and let rich music's tongue
Unfold the imagined happiness that both
Receive in either by this dear encounter.
JUL. Conceit, more rich in matter than in words,
Brags of his substance, not of ornament:
They are but beggars that can count their worth;
But my true love is grown to such excess,
I cannot sum up sum of half my wealth.
FRI. L. Come, come with me, and we will make short work;
For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone
Till holy church incorporate two in one. [*Exeunt.*

30–31 *Conceit . . . ornament*] Imagination, when it is richer in matter than in words, rejoices in its substance, not in the decorative terms which describe it.

32 *They are . . . worth*] Cf. *Ant. and Cleop.*, I, i, 15: "There 's beggary in the love that can be reckon'd."

## ACT THIRD — SCENE I

*A PUBLIC PLACE*

*Enter* MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, Page, *and* Servants

BENVOLIO

I PRAY THEE, GOOD MERcutio, let's retire:
The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,
And, if we meet, we shall not 'scape a brawl;
For now these hot days is the mad blood stirring.

MER. Thou art like one of those fellows that when he enters the confines of a tavern claps me his sword upon the table, and says "God send me no need of thee!" and by the operation of the second cup draws it on the drawer, when indeed there is no need.

8 *the operation . . . cup*] Cf. *2 Hen. IV*, IV, iii, 95; "a good *sherris-sack* hath a twofold *operation* in it."

BEN. Am I like such a fellow? 10

MER. Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy, and as soon moved to be moody, and as soon moody to be moved.

BEN. And what to? 14

MER. Nay, an there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou! why, thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more, or a hair less, in his beard than thou hast: thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes; what eye, but such an eye, would spy out such a quarrel? thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of meat, and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg for quarrelling: thou hast quarrelled with a man for coughing in the street, because he hath wakened thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun: didst thou not fall out with a tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter? with another, for tying his new shoes with old riband? and yet thou wilt tutor me from quarrelling! 29

BEN. An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee-simple of my life for an hour and a quarter.

MER. The fee-simple! O simple!

*Enter* TYBALT *and others*

BEN. By my head, here come the Capulets.

MER. By my heel, I care not.

29 *tutor me from quarrelling*] instruct me how to avoid quarrelling.

31 *fee-simple*] absolute title or ownership.

TYB. Follow me close, for I will speak to them.
Gentlemen, good den: a word with one of you.

MER. And but one word with one of us? couple it with something; make it a word and a blow.

TYB. You shall find me apt enough to that, sir, an you will give me occasion.

MER. Could you not take some occasion without giving?

TYB. Mercutio, thou consort'st with Romeo, —

MER. Consort! what, dost thou make us minstrels? an thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords: here's my fiddlestick; here's that shall make you dance. 'Zounds, consort!

BEN. We talk here in the public haunt of men:
Either withdraw unto some private place,
Or reason coldly of your grievances,
Or else depart; here all eyes gaze on us.

MER. Men's eyes were made to look, and let them gaze;
I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

*Enter* ROMEO

TYB. Well, peace be with you, sir: here comes my man.

MER. But I'll be hang'd, sir, if he wear your livery:
Marry, go before to field, he'll be your follower;
Your worship in that sense may call him man.

TYB. Romeo, the love I bear thee can afford
No better term than this, — thou art a villain.

---

37 *good den*] good evening. Cf. II, iv, 106, *supra*.

44 *Consort*] The term was commonly applied to a band of musicians.

ROM. Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee
Doth much excuse the appertaining rage
To such a greeting: villain am I none;
Therefore farewell; I see thou know'st me not.
TYB. Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries
That thou hast done me; therefore turn and draw.
ROM. I do protest, I never injured thee,
But love thee better than thou canst devise
Till thou shalt know the reason of my love:
And so, good Capulet, — which name I tender
As dearly as mine own, — be satisfied.
MER. O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!
Alla stoccata carries it away. [*Draws.*
Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?
TYB. What wouldst thou have with me?
MER. Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives, that I mean to make bold withal, and, as you shall use me hereafter, dry-beat the rest of the eight. Will you pluck your sword out of his pilcher by the ears? make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

61–62 *excuse the appertaining rage To such a greeting*] account for the absence of the rage appertaining to such a greeting.

64 *Boy*] Here a term of contempt. Cf. *Cor.*, V, vi, 101, *seq.*, where Coriolanus hotly resents the application by Aufidius of the term to him.

72 *Alla stoccata*] a challenge to a rapier duel, "stoccata" being the Italian term for the forward thrust or stab.

73–75 *you rat-catcher . . . Good king of cats*] These expressions pun on Tybalt's name, the cat being often called Tibert. Cf. II, iv, 19, *supra*.

73 *will you walk*] will you come with me?

77 *dry-beat*] thrash or cudgel without drawing blood. Cf. IV, v, 120, *infra*.

78 *pilcher*] scabbard. The word, unknown elsewhere, seems formed from "pilch," which means "a leathern cloak" or "jerkin."

TYB. I am for you. [*Drawing.*

ROM. Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

MER. Come, sir, your passado. [*They fight.*

ROM. Draw, Benvolio; beat down their weapons.
Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage!
Tybalt, Mercutio, the prince expressly hath
Forbid this bandying in Verona streets:
Hold, Tybalt! good Mercutio!

[*Tybalt under Romeo's arms stabs Mercutio and flies with his followers.*

MER. I am hurt;
A plague o' both your houses! I am sped:
Is he gone, and hath nothing?

BEN. What, art thou hurt?

MER. Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch; marry, 't is enough.
Where is my page? Go, villain, fetch a surgeon.

[*Exit Page.*

ROM. Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much.

MER. No, 't is not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door; but 't is enough, 't will serve: ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world. A plague o' both your houses! 'Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! a braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic! Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

---

82 *passado*] forward thrust. Cf. II, iv, 25–27, *supra*, and note.
99 *by the book of arithmetic*] by the technical rules of fencing.

ROM. I thought all for the best.
MER. Help me into some house, Benvolio,
Or I shall faint. A plague o' both your houses!
They have made worms' meat of me: I have it,
And soundly too: your houses!

[*Exeunt Mercutio and Benvolio.*

ROM. This gentleman, the prince's near ally,
My very friend, hath got this mortal hurt
In my behalf; my reputation stain'd
With Tybalt's slander, — Tybalt, that an hour
Hath been my kinsman: O sweet Juliet,
Thy beauty hath made me effeminate,
And in my temper soften'd valour's steel!

*Re-enter* BENVOLIO

BEN. O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio's dead!
That gallant spirit hath aspired the clouds,
Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.
ROM. This day's black fate on more days doth depend;
This but begins the woe others must end.

*Re-enter* TYBALT

BEN. Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.
ROM. Alive, in triumph! and Mercutio slain!

---

107 *My very friend*] My true friend. Cf. *Two Gent.*, III, ii, 41: "his *very friend.*"

114 *aspired*] The verb aspire was often used transitively for "aspire to," "reach." "Consort" (line 127) is similarly used transitively for "consort with."

116 *depend*] hang over, or overhang.

Away to heaven, respective lenity,
And fire-eyed fury be my conduct now!
Now, Tybalt, take the "villain" back again
That late thou gavest me; for Mercutio's soul
Is but a little way above our heads,
Staying for thine to keep him company:
Either thou, or I, or both, must go with him.
TYB. Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him here,
Shalt with him hence.
ROM. This shall determine that.
[*They fight; Tybalt falls.*
BEN. Romeo, away, be gone!
The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain:
Stand not amazed: the prince will doom thee death
If thou art taken: hence, be gone, away!
ROM. O, I am fortune's fool!
BEN. Why dost thou stay?
[*Exit Romeo.*

*Enter* Citizens, &c.

FIRST CIT. Which way ran he that kill'd Mercutio?
Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he?
BEN. There lies that Tybalt.
FIRST CIT. Up, sir, go with me;
I charge thee in the prince's name, obey.

---

120 *respective lenity*] considerate gentleness, scruples of mercy.
121 *conduct*] conductor, guide. Cf. V, iii, 116, *infra*, and note.
127 *consort*] consort with; used transitively; see ll. 43 and 114, *supra*.
133 *fortune's fool*] the sport of fortune.

*Enter* Prince, *attended;* MONTAGUE, CAPULET, *their* Wives, *and others*

PRIN. Where are the vile beginners of this fray?
BEN. O noble prince, I can discover all
The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl:
There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.
LA. CAP. Tybalt, my cousin! O my brother's child!
O prince! O cousin! husband! O, the blood is spilt
Of my dear kinsman! Prince, as thou art true,
For blood of ours, shed blood of Montague.
O cousin, cousin!
PRIN. Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?
BEN. Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay;
Romeo that spoke him fair, bid him bethink
How nice the quarrel was, and urged withal
Your high displeasure: all this uttered
With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly bow'd,
Could not take truce with the unruly spleen

---

139–140 *I can discover . . . manage*] I can disclose all the unlucky procedure.
142 *kinsman*] Cf. I, ii, 66, *supra*, and note, and line 186, *infra*.
150 *Romeo that spoke him fair*] Benvolio's account of the encounter between Tybalt and Mercutio does not follow the facts. See line 174, *infra*. Mercutio forced his own quarrel on Tybalt.
151 *nice*] trifling, unimportant. Cf. V, ii, 18, *infra*.
153 *gentle breath*] kindly words.
154 *take truce*] make peace.

Of Tybalt deaf to peace, but that he tilts
With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast;
Who, all as hot, turns deadly point to point,
And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats
Cold death aside, and with the other sends
It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity
Retorts it: Romeo he cries aloud,
"Hold, friends! friends, part!" and, swifter than his tongue,
His agile arm beats down their fatal points,
And 'twixt them rushes; underneath whose arm
An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life
Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled:
But by and by comes back to Romeo,
Who had but newly entertain'd revenge,
And to 't they go like lightning: for, ere I
Could draw to part them, was stout Tybalt slain;
And, as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly;
This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

LA. CAP. He is a kinsman to the Montague,
Affection makes him false, he speaks not true:
Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,
And all those twenty could but kill one life.
I beg for justice, which thou, prince, must give;
Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.

PRIN. Romeo slew him, he slew Mercutio;
Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe?

MON. Not Romeo, prince, he was Mercutio's friend;
His fault concludes but what the law should end,
The life of Tybalt.

PRIN. And for that offence
Immediately we do exile him hence:
I have an interest in your hate's proceeding,
My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a-bleeding;
But I'll amerce you with so strong a fine,
That you shall all repent the loss of mine:
I will be deaf to pleading and excuses;
Nor tears nor prayers shall purchase out abuses:
Therefore use none: let Romeo hence in haste,
Else, when he's found, that hour is his last.
Bear hence this body, and attend our will:
Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II — CAPULET'S ORCHARD

*Enter* JULIET

JUL. Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
Towards Phœbus' lodging: such a waggoner
As Phaethon would whip you to the west,
And bring in cloudy night immediately.
Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,

185 *hate's*] Thus substantially the First Quarto. Other early editions read *hearts*.

186 *My blood*] My kinsman. Cf. I, ii, 66, *supra*, and note, and V, iii, 294.

1–2 *Gallop apace . . . lodging*] Cf. Marlowe's *Edward II*, IV, iii, 45–48: "*Gallop apace, bright Phœbus*, through the sky, *And dusky night, in rusty iron car.* Between you both, shorten the time, I pray, That I may see that most desired day." Juliet bids the sun retire, and make way for the night.

That runaways' eyes may wink, and Romeo
Leap to these arms, untalk'd of and unseen.
Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
By their own beauties; or, if love be blind,
It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,
Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,
And learn me how to lose a winning match,
Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods:
Hood my unmann'd blood bating in my cheeks
With thy black mantle, till strange love grown bold
Think true love acted simple modesty.
Come, night, come, Romeo, come, thou day in night;
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night

6 *That runaways' eyes may wink*] Thus substantially all the early editions. The meaning of the phrase has been discussed at great length by the commentators, and many textual changes have been suggested. "Runaway" in the sense of "wanderer" or "truant" is found in *Rich. III*, V, iii, 316: "A sort of vagabonds, rascals, and *runaways*," where Holinshed in the corresponding passage employs the commoner form "runagates" (*i. e.* vagrants). "Wink" in Elizabethan English ordinarily means "shut the eyes." If we accept the present reading, Juliet can mean nothing more than that wanderers by night (in the streets), late revellers, may shut their eyes in the darkness and not see Romeo come to her chamber. Those who find this interpretation too prosaic may substitute *runaway's* for *runaways'*, and treat the word as a playful synonym for the disappearing day.

10 *civil night*] grave, solemn night.

14 *Hood . . . unmann'd . . . bating*] conceal my virgin blood fluttering. The words are terms in falconry. To "hood" a hawk was to cover its eyes with a cap, before it was let fly. An "unmanned" hawk was one untrained, unaccustomed to obey the falconer's directions. "Bate" was to flutter the wings.

15 *strange*] timid, retiring. Cf. II, ii, 101, *supra*.

Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.
Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-brow'd night,
Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine,
That all the world will be in love with night,
And pay no worship to the garish sun.
O, I have bought the mansion of a love,
But not possess'd it, and, though I am sold,
Not yet enjoy'd; so tedious is this day
As is the night before some festival
To an impatient child that hath new robes
And may not wear them. O, here comes my nurse,
And she brings news, and every tongue that speaks
But Romeo's name speaks heavenly eloquence.

*Enter* Nurse, *with cords*

Now, nurse, what news? What hast thou there? the cords
That Romeo bid thee fetch?

NURSE. Ay, ay, the cords.

[*Throws them down.*

JUL. Ay me! what news? why dost thou wring thy hands?

NURSE. Ah, well-a-day! he's dead, he's dead, he's dead.
We are undone, lady, we are undone.
Alack the day! he's gone, he's kill'd, he's dead.

JUL. Can heaven be so envious?

40 *envious*] malicious.

NURSE. Romeo can,
Though heaven cannot. O Romeo, Romeo!
Who ever would have thought it? Romeo!
JUL. What devil art thou that dost torment me thus?
This torture should be roar'd in dismal hell.
Hath Romeo slain himself? say thou but "I,"
And that bare vowel "I" shall poison more
Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice:
I am not I, if there be such an I,
Or those eyes shut, that make thee answer "I."
If he be slain, say "I;" or if not, no:
Brief sounds determine of my weal or woe.
NURSE. I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes —
God save the mark! — here on his manly breast:
A piteous corse, a bloody piteous corse;
Pale, pale as ashes, all bedaub'd in blood,
All in gore blood: I swounded at the sight.
JUL. O, break, my heart! poor bankrupt, break at once!
To prison, eyes, ne'er look on liberty!
Vile earth, to earth resign, end motion here,
And thou and Romeo press one heavy bier!

---

45–46 "*I*" . . . "*I*"] "I" in the first instance stands for "ay," as was a common practice. The second "I" (line 46) puns on the word "eye" (line 47).

47 *cockatrice*] the fabled serpent with the head of a cock, which was said to kill, like the basilisk, with its glance.

51 *determine of*] decide.

53 *God save the mark!*] "God bless us all," "absit omen," a common adjuratory exclamation.

56 *swounded*] a common Elizabethan form of "swooned."

NURSE. O Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I had!
O courteous Tybalt! honest gentleman!
That ever I should live to see thee dead!
JUL. What storm is this that blows so contrary?
Is Romeo slaughter'd, and is Tybalt dead?
My dear-loved cousin, and my dearer lord?
Then, dreadful trumpet, sound the general doom!
For who is living, if those two are gone?
NURSE. Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished;
Romeo that kill'd him, he is banished.
JUL. O God! did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?
NURSE. It did, it did; alas the day, it did!
JUL. O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!
Dove-feather'd raven! wolvish-ravening lamb!
Despised substance of divinest show!
Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st,
A damned saint, an honourable villain!
O nature, what hadst thou to do in hell,
When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend
In mortal paradise of such sweet flesh?
Was ever book containing such vile matter
So fairly bound? O, that deceit should dwell
In such a gorgeous palace!
NURSE. There's no trust,

74 *keep*] inhabit, haunt.
76 *Dove-feather'd raven!*] Theobald's emendation of the reading of the three earliest Quartos and First Folio, *Ravenous dovefeathered Raven.* All other early editions read *Rauenous doue, feathred Rauen.*
81 *bower*] enclose.

No faith, no honesty in men; all perjured,
All forsworn, all naught, all dissemblers.
Ah, where's my man? give me some aqua vitæ:
These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old.
Shame come to Romeo!

JUL. Blister'd be thy tongue
For such a wish! he was not born to shame:
Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit;
For 't is a throne where honour may be crown'd
Sole monarch of the universal earth.
O, what a beast was I to chide at him!

NURSE. Will you speak well of him that kill'd your cousin?

JUL. Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?
Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name,
When I, thy three-hours wife, have mangled it?
But wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?
That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband:
Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring;
Your tributary drops belong to woe,
Which you mistaking offer up to joy.
My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain;
And Tybalt 's dead, that would have slain my husband:
All this is comfort; wherefore weep I then?
Some word there was, worser than Tybalt's death,
That murder'd me: I would forget it fain;

88 *aqua vitæ*] ardent spirits, used as stimulants or restoratives. Cf. IV, v, 16, *infra*.

98 *smooth thy name*] speak thy name fair, speak well of thee, mitigate blame of thee.

But, O, it presses to my memory,
Like damned guilty deeds to sinners' minds:
"Tybalt is dead, and Romeo banished;"
That "banished," that one word "banished,"
Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts. Tybalt's death
Was woe enough, if it had ended there:
Or, if sour woe delights in fellowship,
And needly will be rank'd with other griefs,
Why follow'd not, when she said "Tybalt's dead,"
Thy father, or thy mother, nay, or both,
Which modern lamentation might have moved?
But with a rear-ward following Tybalt's death,
"Romeo is banished:" to speak that word,
Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
All slain, all dead. "Romeo is banished."
There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,
In that word's death; no words can that woe sound.
Where is my father, and my mother, nurse?

NURSE. Weeping and wailing over Tybalt's corse:
Will you go to them? I will bring you thither.

JUL. Wash they his wounds with tears: mine shall be spent,

114 *Hath slain . . . Tybalts*] Is worse than the death of ten thousand Tybalts.

117 *needly will be*] must needs be.

120 *modern lamentation*] trite, ordinary grief. Cf. *As you like it*, II, vii, 156: "*modern* instances."

121 *rear-ward*] Cf. *Sonnet* xc, 6: "Come in the *rear-ward* of a conquer'd woe."

126 *In that word's death*] In the death or ruin which that word "banished" can deal.

When theirs are dry, for Romeo's banishment.
Take up those cords: poor ropes, you are beguiled,
Both you and I; for Romeo is exiled:
He made you for a highway to my bed;
But I, a maid, die maiden-widowed.
Come, cords; come, nurse; I'll to my wedding-bed;
And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead!
NURSE. Hie to your chamber: I'll find Romeo
To comfort you: I wot well where he is.
Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night: 140
I'll to him; he is hid at Laurence' cell.
JUL. O, find him! give this ring to my true knight,
And bid him come to take his last farewell. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE III — FRIAR LAURENCE'S CELL

*Enter* FRIAR LAURENCE

FRI. L. Romeo, come forth; come forth, thou fearful man:
Affliction is enamour'd of thy parts,
And thou art wedded to calamity.

*Enter* ROMEO

ROM. Father, what news? what is the prince's doom?
What sorrow craves acquaintance at my hand,
That I yet know not?
FRI. L. Too familiar

1 *fearful*] filled with fears.

Is my dear son with such sour company:
I bring thee tidings of the prince's doom.
ROM. What less than dooms-day is the prince's doom?
FRI. L. A gentler judgement vanish'd from his lips,
Not body's death, but body's banishment.
ROM. Ha, banishment! be merciful, say "death;"
For exile hath more terror in his look,
Much more than death: do not say "banishment."
FRI. L. Here from Verona art thou banished:
Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.
ROM. There is no world without Verona walls,
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.
Hence banished is banish'd from the world,
And world's exile is death: then "banished"
Is death mis-term'd: calling death "banished,"
Thou cut'st my head off with a golden axe,
And smilest upon the stroke that murders me.
FRI. L. O deadly sin! O rude unthankfulness!
Thy fault our law calls death; but the kind prince,
Taking thy part, hath rush'd aside the law,
And turn'd that black word death to banishment:
This is dear mercy, and thou seest it not.
ROM. 'T is torture, and not mercy: heaven is here,
Where Juliet lives; and every cat and dog

10 *vanish'd*] issued forth. The usage is rare. But cf. Massinger's *Renegado*, V, v: "Those lips from which those *sweet words vanish'd*."

19–21 *Hence banished . . . "banished"*] Cf. *Two Gent.*, III, i, 171, *seq.*: "To *die* is to be *banish'd* from myself," and lines 40–43, *infra*.

25 *our law calls death*] our law proclaims to be punishable by death.

26 *rush'd aside*] brushed aside.

28 *dear*] absolute, signal.

And little mouse, every unworthy thing,
Live here in heaven and may look on her,
But Romeo may not: more validity,
More honourable state, more courtship lives
In carrion-flies than Romeo: they may seize
On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand,
And steal immortal blessing from her lips;
Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin;
But Romeo may not; he is banished: 40
This may flies do, but I from this must fly:
They are free men, but I am banished:
And say'st thou yet, that exile is not death?
Hadst thou no poison mix'd, no sharp-ground knife,
No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,
But "banished" to kill me? — "Banished"?
O friar, the damned use that word in hell;
Howling attends it: how hast thou the heart,
Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,

---

33 *validity*] worth, value.

34 *more courtship*] more opportunity of showing (and receiving) courtesy.

37–43 *And steal . . . is not death*] This is a revised version of the original text. The first Quarto omits all but lines 37 ("And steal, etc."), 40 ("But Romeo, etc."), and 41 ("This may flies, etc."), which it presents with some doubtful readings. The other Quartos, while they supply the whole passage, not only arrange lines 40–43 in an order different from that adopted here, but insert after line 41 a supererogatory duplicate version of it: *Flies may do this, but I from this must flie.* The Folios, which follow the version of the second and later Quartos, omit the superfluous duplicate of line 41.

49 *ghostly confessor*] spiritual minister or priest. Cf. II, vi, 21, and II, iii,

A sin-absolver, and my friend profess'd,
To mangle me with that word "banished"?
FRI. L. Thou fond mad man, hear me but speak a word.
ROM. O, thou wilt speak again of banishment.
FRI. L. I'll give thee armour to keep off that word;
Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy,
To comfort thee, though thou art banished.
ROM. Yet "banished"? Hang up philosophy!
Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,
Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom,
It helps not, it prevails not: talk no more.
FRI. L. O, then I see that madmen have no ears.
ROM. How should they, when that wise men have no eyes?
FRI. L. Let me dispute with thee of thy estate.
ROM. Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel:
Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,
An hour but married, Tybalt murdered,
Doting like me, and like me banished,
Then mightst thou speak, then mightst thou tear thy hair,
And fall upon the ground, as I do now,
Taking the measure of an unmade grave.
[*Knocking within.*
FRI. L. Arise; one knocks; good Romeo, hide thyself.

---

45, *supra*, "my *ghostly* father." *Confessor* is accented on the first and third syllables.

63 *dispute with thee of thy estate*] discuss thy affairs with thee. Cf. *Wint. Tale*, IV, iv, 392: "*dispute his own estate?*"

ROM. Not I; unless the breath of heart-sick groans
Mist-like infold me from the search of eyes. [*Knocking.*
FRI. L. Hark, how they knock! Who's there? Romeo, arise;
Thou wilt be taken. — Stay awhile! — Stand up; [*Knocking.*
Run to my study. — By and by! — God's will,
What simpleness is this! — I come, I come! [*Knocking.*
Who knocks so hard? whence come you? what's your will?
NURSE. [*Within*] Let me come in, and you shall know my errand;
I come from Lady Juliet.
FRI. L. Welcome, then.

*Enter* Nurse

NURSE. O holy friar, O, tell me, holy friar,
Where is my lady's lord, where's Romeo?
FRI. L. There on the ground, with his own tears made drunk.
NURSE. O, he is even in my mistress' case,
Just in her case!
FRI. L. O woeful sympathy!
Piteous predicament!
NURSE. Even so lies she,
Blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering.

---

76 *By and by*] At once. Cf. II, ii, 151, III, i, 167, V, iii, 283, *infra.*
77 *simpleness*] stupidity.
85–86 O *woeful* . . . *predicament*] The old editions wrongly give these words to the nurse.

Stand up, stand up; stand, an you be a man:
For Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand;
Why should you fall into so deep an O?
ROM. Nurse!
NURSE. Ah sir! ah sir! Well, death's the end of all.
ROM. Spakest thou of Juliet? how is it with her?
Doth she not think me an old murderer,
Now I have stain'd the childhood of our joy
With blood removed but little from her own?
Where is she? and how doth she? and what says
My conceal'd lady to our cancell'd love?
NURSE. O, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps;
And now falls on her bed; and then starts up,
And Tybalt calls; and then on Romeo cries,
And then down falls again.
ROM. As if that name,
Shot from the deadly level of a gun,
Did murder her, as that name's cursed hand
Murder'd her kinsman. O, tell me, friar, tell me,
In what vile part of this anatomy
Doth my name lodge? tell me, that I may sack
The hateful mansion. [*Drawing his sword.*
FRI. L. Hold thy desperate hand:
Art thou a man? thy form cries out thou art:
Thy tears are womanish; thy wild acts denote
The unreasonable fury of a beast:

---

94 *an old murderer*] a veteran or professional murderer.

98 *My conceal'd lady*] My secret mistress. The fact of Romeo's relationship with her is concealed.

Unseemly woman in a seeming man!
Or ill-beseeming beast in seeming both!
Thou hast amazed me: by my holy order,
I thought thy disposition better temper'd.
Hast thou slain Tybalt? wilt thou slay thyself?
And slay thy lady that in thy life lives,
By doing damned hate upon thyself?
Why rail'st thou on thy birth, the heaven and earth?
Since birth and heaven and earth, all three do meet
In thee at once, which thou at once wouldst lose.
Fie, fie, thou shamest thy shape, thy love, thy wit;
Which, like a usurer, abound'st in all,
And usest none in that true use indeed
Which should bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit:
Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,
Digressing from the valour of a man;
Thy dear love sworn, but hollow perjury,
Killing that love which thou hast vow'd to cherish;
Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,
Mis-shapen in the conduct of them both,
Like powder in a skilless soldier's flask,

112 *Unseemly . . . man*] Unseemly womanishness in one having the appearance of a man.

119 *Why rail'st thou on thy birth*] Romeo has not in his addresses to the friar railed on his birth. But in Brooke's Poem, which Shakespeare in this line obviously had in mind, Romeo is credited with blaming nature, with fiercely reproving the place and time of his birth, with crying out against the stars above and with railing on fortune.

132 *Like powder . . . flask*] Soldiers using muskets with matchlocks carried at their belts a lighted match, which might, in the absence of due care, come into perilous proximity with the wooden flask in which they kept their gunpowder.

Is set a-fire by thine own ignorance,
And thou dismember'd with thine own defence.
What, rouse thee, man! thy Juliet is alive,
For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead;
There art thou happy: Tybalt would kill thee,
But thou slew'st Tybalt; there art thou happy too:
The law, that threaten'd death, becomes thy friend,
And turns it to exile; there art thou happy:
A pack of blessings lights upon thy back;
Happiness courts thee in her best array;
But, like a misbehaved and sullen wench,
Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love:
Take heed, take heed, for such die miserable.
Go, get thee to thy love, as was decreed,
Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her:
But look thou stay not till the watch be set,
For then thou canst not pass to Mantua;
Where thou shalt live till we can find a time
To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,
Beg pardon of the prince, and call thee back
With twenty hundred thousand times more joy
Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.
Go before, nurse: commend me to thy lady,
And bid her hasten all the house to bed,

134 *And thou dismember'd . . . defence*] And thou torn to pieces with thine own weapons of defence.
137 *happy*] lucky, fortunate. So 138, 140, *infra*.
142 *Happiness*] Luck.
144 *pout'st upon*] grumblest at, pout at (with the lips). Cf. *Cor.*, V, i, 52: "We *pout upon* the morning."
151 *blaze*] proclaim; a term of heraldry.

Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto:
Romeo is coming.
NURSE. O Lord, I could have stay'd here all the night
To hear good counsel: O, what learning is!
My lord, I 'll tell my lady you will come.
ROM. Do so, and bid my sweet prepare to chide.
NURSE. Here, sir, a ring she bid me give you, sir:
Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late. [*Exit.*
ROM. How well my comfort is revived by this!
FRI. L. Go hence; good night; and here stands all
your state:
Either be gone before the watch be set,
Or by the break of day disguised from hence:
Sojourn in Mantua; I 'll find out your man.
And he shall signify from time to time
Every good hap to you that chances here:
Give me thy hand; 't is late: farewell; good night.
ROM. But that a joy past joy calls out on me,
It were a grief, so brief to part with thee:
Farewell. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE IV — A ROOM IN CAPULET'S HOUSE

*Enter* CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, *and* PARIS

CAP. Things have fall'n out, sir, so unluckily,
That we have had no time to move our daughter.

166 *here stands . . . state*] your whole fortune depends on this.
174 *so brief to part*] to take so hasty a farewell.
2 *move our daughter*] to propose the question to our daughter, to invite her to consider the subject.

Look you, she loved her kinsman Tybalt dearly,
And so did I. Well, we were born to die.
'T is very late; she'll not come down to-night:
I promise you, but for your company,
I would have been a-bed an hour ago.

PAR. These times of woe afford no time to woo.
Madam, good night: commend me to your daughter.

LA. CAP. I will, and know her mind early to-morrow;
To-night she's mew'd up to her heaviness.

CAP. Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender
Of my child's love: I think she will be ruled
In all respects by me; nay more, I doubt it not.
Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed;
Acquaint her here of my son Paris' love;
And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next —
But, soft! what day is this?

PAR. Monday, my lord.

CAP. Monday! ha, ha! Well, Wednesday is too soon;
O' Thursday let it be: o' Thursday, tell her,
She shall be married to this noble earl.
Will you be ready? do you like this haste?
We'll keep no great ado; a friend or two;
For, hark you, Tybalt being slain so late,
It may be thought we held him carelessly,
Being our kinsman, if we revel much:

---

11 *mew'd up to her heaviness*] shut up, owing to her grief.
12 *desperate tender*] bold, confident offer.
21 *earl*] See note on I, iii, 105, *supra:* "county Paris."

Therefore we'll have some half-a-dozen friends,
And there an end. But what say you to Thursday?

PAR. My lord, I would that Thursday were to-morrow.

CAP. Well, get you gone: o' Thursday be it then.
Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed,
Prepare her, wife, against this wedding-day.
Farewell, my lord. Light to my chamber, ho!
Afore me, it is so very very late,
That we may call it early by and by:
Good night. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE V — CAPULET'S ORCHARD

*Enter* ROMEO *and* JULIET, *above, at the window*

JUL. Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear;
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate-tree:
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

ROM. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops:
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

JUL. Yond light is not day-light, I know it, I:

---

34 *Afore me*] a mild adjuration, expressing surprise.

It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,
And light thee on thy way to Mantua:
Therefore stay yet; thou need'st not to be gone.
ROM. Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
I'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye,
'T is but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads:
I have more care to stay than will to go:
Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.
How is 't, my soul? let's talk: it is not day.
JUL. It is, it is: hie hence, be gone, away!
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.
Some say the lark makes sweet division;
This doth not so, for she divideth us:
Some say the lark and loathed toad change eyes;
O, now I would they had changed voices too!

---

13 *It is some meteor . . . exhales*] Meteors were commonly thought to be formed of vapour thrown off by the sun. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, II, iv, 310–311: "do you see these *meteors?* do you behold these *exhalations?*"

20 *Cynthia's brow*] the forehead of Cynthia, a classical name of the moon. Cynthia, the moon goddess, who is also identified with Diana, was commonly represented with a crescent moon on her forehead.

29 *division*] a musical term for the harmonical variation of a melody. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, III, i, 209–210: "Sung by a fair queen . . . With ravishing *division* to her lute."

31 *Some say the lark . . . change eyes*] The ugliness of the lark's eye and the beauty of the toad's gave rise to a popular notion that the two had

Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray
Hunting thee hence with hunts-up to the day.
O, now be gone; more light and light it grows.
ROM. More light and light: more dark and dark our woes!

*Enter* NURSE, *to the chamber*

NURSE. Madam!
JUL. Nurse?
NURSE. Your lady mother is coming to your chamber:
The day is broke; be wary, look about. [*Exit.* 40
JUL. Then, window, let day in, and let life out.
ROM. Farewell, farewell! one kiss, and I'll descend.
[*Descends.*
JUL. Art thou gone so? my lord, my love, my friend!
I must hear from thee every day in the hour,
For in a minute there are many days:
O, by this count I shall be much in years
Ere I again behold my Romeo!
ROM. Farewell!

---

made an exchange of eyes. Had the lark changed voices with the toad, the bird, Juliet imagines, would not be the clear-toned herald of the day.

34 *hunts-up*] the réveillé or tune sounded on the trumpet to announce the opening of the hunt. Many old hunting songs began with the words "The hunt is up," and the music opened with the notes of the huntsman's réveillé.

43 *my lord, my love, my friend*] Thus the First Quarto. The other early editions read *love, Lord, ay husband, friend.*

I will omit no opportunity
That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.
JUL. O, think'st thou we shall ever meet again?
ROM. I doubt it not; and all these woes shall serve
For sweet discourses in our time to come.
JUL. O God! I have an ill-divining soul.
Methinks I see thee, now thou art below,
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb:
Either my eyesight fails or thou look'st pale.
ROM. And trust me, love, in my eye so do you:
Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu, adieu! [*Exit.*
JUL. O fortune, fortune! all men call thee fickle:
If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him
That is renown'd for faith? Be fickle, fortune;
For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,
But send him back.
LA. CAP. [*Within*] Ho, daughter! are you up?
JUL. Who is 't that calls? it is my lady mother!
Is she not down so late, or up so early?
What unaccustom'd cause procures her hither?

---

54 *ill-divining*] ill-foreboding.

59 *Dry sorrow . . . blood*] Grief without tears draws its sustenance from our blood. Cf. *3 Hen. VI*, IV, iv, 22: "blood-sucking sighs." It was a common belief that grief drained the heart of blood.

66 *down . . . up*] "down" here means "in bed" and "up" "out of bed." "Down" is similarly used, IV, v, 12, *infra*. Juliet asks if her mother is not in bed at so late an hour, or whether it is not very early for her to be up. Cf. *Tw. Night*, II, iii, 7–8: "To be *up* after midnight and to go to bed then, is *early:* so that to go to bed after midnight is to go to bed betimes."

67 *procures*] brings.

*Enter* LADY CAPULET

LA. CAP. Why, how now, Juliet!
JUL. Madam, I am not well.
LA. CAP. Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?
What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?
An if thou couldst, thou couldst not make him live;
Therefore have done: some grief shows much of love,
But much of grief shows still some want of wit.
JUL. Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.
LA. CAP. So shall you feel the loss, but not the friend
Which you weep for.
JUL. Feeling so the loss,
I cannot choose but ever weep the friend.
LA. CAP. Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his death
As that the villain lives which slaughter'd him.
JUL. What villain, madam?
LA. CAP. That same villain, Romeo.
JUL. [*Aside*] Villain and he be many miles asunder.
God pardon him! I do, with all my heart;
And yet no man like he doth grieve my heart.
LA. CAP. That is because the traitor murderer lives.
JUL. Ay, madam, from the reach of these my hands:
Would none but I might venge my cousin's death!
LA. CAP. We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not:
Then weep no more. I'll send to one in Mantua,
Where that same banish'd runagate doth live,
Shall give him such an unaccustom'd dram
That he shall soon keep Tybalt company:
And then, I hope, thou wilt be satisfied.

JUL. Indeed, I never shall be satisfied
With Romeo, till I behold him — dead —
Is my poor heart so for a kinsman vex'd.
Madam, if you could find out but a man
To bear a poison, I would temper it,
That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,
Soon sleep in quiet. O, how my heart abhors
To hear him named, and cannot come to him,
To wreak the love I bore my cousin
Upon his body that hath slaughter'd him!
LA. CAP. Find thou the means, and I'll find such a man.
But now I'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.
JUL. And joy comes well in such a needy time:
What are they, I beseech your ladyship?
LA. CAP. Well, well, thou hast a careful father, child;
One who, to put thee from thy heaviness,
Hath sorted out a sudden day of joy,
That thou expect'st not, nor I look'd not for.
JUL. Madam, in happy time, what day is that?
LA. CAP. Marry, my child, early next Thursday morn,
The gallant, young, and noble gentleman,
The County Paris, at Saint Peter's Church,
Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

---

101 *cousin*] The second and later Folios complete the metre by reading *cousin Tybalt*. The earlier editions omit the name.

111 *in happy time*] used like the French "à la bonne heure," to express reluctant assent; "so be it, if you will."

114 *County*] See notes on I, iii, 105, and III, iv, 21, *supra*.

JUL. Now, by Saint Peter's Church, and Peter too,
He shall not make me there a joyful bride.
I wonder at this haste; that I must wed
Ere he that should be husband comes to woo.
I pray you, tell my lord and father, madam,
I will not marry yet; and, when I do, I swear,
It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate,
Rather than Paris. These are news indeed!

LA. CAP. Here comes your father; tell him so yourself,
And see how he will take it at your hands.

*Enter* CAPULET *and* Nurse

CAP. When the sun sets, the air doth drizzle dew;
But for the sunset of my brother's son
It rains downright.
How now! a conduit, girl? what, still in tears?
Evermore showering? In one little body
Thou counterfeit'st a bark, a sea, a wind:
For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea,
Do ebb and flow with tears; the bark thy body is,
Sailing in this salt flood; the winds, thy sighs;
Who raging with thy tears, and they with them,
Without a sudden calm will overset
Thy tempest-tossed body. How now, wife!
Have you deliver'd to her our decree?

126 *air*] Thus the Fourth and Fifth Quartos. The earlier editions read *earth*, which it is difficult to accept.

127 *brother's son*] brother-in-law's son. Tybalt was apparently son of Lady Capulet's brother. Cf. III, i, 143, *supra*, where Lady Capulet speaks of "Tybalt, my cousin! O *my brother's child!*"

129 *conduit*] fountain.

LA. CAP. Ay, sir; but she will none, she gives you thanks.
I would the fool were married to her grave!
CAP. Soft! take me with you, take me with you, wife.
How! will she none? doth she not give us thanks?
Is she not proud? doth she not count her blest,
Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought
So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?
JUL. Not proud, you have, but thankful that you have:
Proud can I never be of what I hate;
But thankful even for hate that is meant love.
CAP. How, how! how, how! chop-logic! What is this?
"Proud," and "I thank you," and "I thank you not;"
And yet "not proud:" mistress minion, you,
Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds,
But fettle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next,
To go with Paris to Saint Peter's Church,
Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.
Out, you green-sickness carrion! out, you baggage!
You tallow-face!

---

141 *take me with you*] let me understand you.
148 *meant*] *sc.* to be, meant for.
149 *chop-logic*] silly sophistry.
152 *Thank me no thankings . . . prouds*] Cf. *Rich. II*, II, iii, 87: "Grace me no grace, nor uncle me no uncle."
153 *fettle*] make ready.
156 *carrion*] a vague term of abuse; here used with a reference to Juliet's deathly pale face. Cf. *M. Wives*, III, iii, 170: "that foolish *carrion*, Mistress Quickly."

LA. CAP. Fie, fie! what, are you mad?
JUL. Good father, I beseech you on my knees,
Hear me with patience but to speak a word.
CAP. Hang thee, young baggage! disobedient wretch!
I tell thee what: get thee to church o' Thursday,
Or never after look me in the face:
Speak not, reply not, do not answer me;
My fingers itch. Wife, we scarce thought us blest
That God had lent us but this only child;
But now I see this one is one too much,
And that we have a curse in having her:
Out on her, hilding!
NURSE. God in heaven bless her!
You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so.
CAP. And why, my lady wisdom? hold your tongue,
Good prudence; smatter with your gossips, go.
NURSE. I speak no treason.
CAP. O, God ye god-den.
NURSE. May not one speak?
CAP. Peace, you mumbling fool!
Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl;
For here we need it not.
LA. CAP. You are too hot.

---

164 *My fingers itch*] *sc.* to beat her.
168 *hilding*] a low menial. Cf. II, iv, 42, *supra*.
171 *smatter*] prattle.
172 *God ye god-den*] Capulet mimics the nurse's manner of speech. For "godden" (*i. e.*, good evening), cf. I, ii, 56, *supra*.
174 *a gossip's bowl*] "Gossip" was a midwife, or any garrulous old crone, whose tongue usually wagged freely over her liquor. Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, II, i, 47: "a *gossip's bowl.*"

CAP. God's bread! it makes me mad:
Day, night, hour, tide, time, work, play,
Alone, in company, still my care hath been
To have her match'd: and having now provided
A gentleman of noble parentage,
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly train'd,
Stuff'd, as they say, with honourable parts,
Proportion'd as one's thought would wish a man;
And then to have a wretched puling fool,
A whining mammet, in her fortune's tender,
To answer "I'll not wed; I cannot love,
I am too young; I pray you, pardon me."
But, an you will not wed, I'll pardon you:
Graze where you will, you shall not house with me:
Look to 't, think on 't, I do not use to jest.
Thursday is near; lay hand on heart, advise:
An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend;
An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in the streets,
For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,
Nor what is mine shall never do thee good:
Trust to 't, bethink you; I'll not be forsworn. [*Exit.*

JUL. Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,
That sees into the bottom of my grief?
O, sweet my mother, cast me not away!
Delay this marriage for a month, a week;

176–178 *God's bread . . . company*] Thus the early editions. The incoherent metre and language reflects the speaker's passionate anger.

182 *Stuff'd . . . parts*] Cf. *Much Ado*, I, i, 47–48: "*stuffed* with all *honourable virtues.*"

185 *mammet . . . tender*] puppet, at the moment when fortune is making her a good offer.

Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.
LA. CAP. Talk not to me, for I 'll not speak a word:
Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee. [*Exit.*
JUL. O God! — O nurse, how shall this be prevented?
My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven;
How shall that faith return again to earth,
Unless that husband send it me from heaven
By leaving earth? comfort me, counsel me.
Alack, alack, that heaven should practise stratagems
Upon so soft a subject as myself!
What say'st thou? hast thou not a word of joy?
Some comfort, nurse.
NURSE. Faith, here it is.
Romeo is banish'd, and all the world to nothing,
That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you;
Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.
Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,
I think it best you married with the county.
O, he 's a lovely gentleman!
Romeo's a dishclout to him: an eagle, madam,
Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye
As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,
I think you are happy in this second match,
For it excels your first: or if it did not,

---

218 *county*] count. See note on I, iii, 105, *supra.*

221 *so green . . . an eye*] Eyes with a green tint in them were reckoned auspicious and attractive in 16th-century Europe. Cf. Bacon's *History of Life and Death*, p. 124: "Great eyes with a *green circle* between the white [of the pupil] and the white of the eye signify long life."

Your first is dead, or 't were as good he were
As living here and you no use of him.
JUL. Speakest thou from thy heart?
NURSE. And from my soul too; else beshrew them both.
JUL. Amen!
NURSE. What?
JUL. Well, thou hast comforted me marvellous much.
Go in, and tell my lady I am gone,
Having displeased my father, to Laurence' cell,
To make confession and to be absolved.
NURSE. Marry, I will, and this is wisely done. [*Exit.*
JUL. Ancient damnation! O most wicked fiend!
Is it more sin to wish me thus forsworn,
Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue
Which she hath praised him with above compare
So many thousand times? Go, counsellor;
Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain.
I'll to the friar, to know his remedy:
If all else fail, myself have power to die. [*Exit.*

226 *As living here . . . use of him*] The nurse's language is not very coherent. Dr. Johnson explains "here" as "in this world." But the meaning of the line may be "Even if Romeo were living here and you had no access to him."

## ACT FOURTH — SCENE I

*FRIAR LAURENCE'S CELL*

*Enter* FRIAR LAURENCE *and* PARIS

FRIAR LAURENCE

ON THURSDAY, SIR? THE time is very short.

PAR. My father Capulet will have it so;
And I am nothing slow to slack his haste.

FRI. L. You say you do not know the lady's mind:
Uneven is the course; I like it not.

PAR. Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death,
And therefore have I little talk'd of love,
For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.
Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous

3 *I am nothing slow . . . haste*] There is no reluctance on my part which is calculated to restrain his haste.

That she doth give her sorrow so much sway,
And in his wisdom hastes our marriage,
To stop the inundation of her tears,
Which, too much minded by herself alone,
May be put from her by society:
Now do you know the reason of this haste.
FRI. L. [*Aside*] I would I knew not why it should be slow'd.
Look, sir, here comes the lady toward my cell.

*Enter* JULIET

PAR. Happily met, my lady and my wife!
JUL. That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.
PAR. That may be must be, love, on Thursday next.
JUL. What must be shall be.
FRI. L. That's a certain text.
PAR. Come you to make confession to this father?
JUL. To answer that, I should confess to you.
PAR. Do not deny to him that you love me.
JUL. I will confess to you that I love him.
PAR. So will ye, I am sure, that you love me.
JUL. If I do so, it will be of more price,
Being spoke behind your back, than to your face.
PAR. Poor soul, thy face is much abused with tears.
JUL. The tears have got small victory by that;
For it was bad enough before their spite.
PAR. Thou wrong'st it more than tears with that report.

5 *Uneven*] Rough, uncertain.
13 *too much minded . . . alone*] too much brooded over (or indulged in) by her in solitude.

JUL. That is no slander, sir, which is a truth,
And what I spake, I spake it to my face.
PAR. Thy face is mine, and thou hast slander'd it.
JUL. It may be so, for it is not mine own.
Are you at leisure, holy father, now;
Or shall I come to you at evening mass?
FRI. L. My leisure serves me, pensive daughter, now.
My lord, we must entreat the time alone.
PAR. God shield I should disturb devotion!
Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse ye:
Till then, adieu, and keep this holy kiss. [*Exit.*
JUL. O, shut the door, and when thou hast done so,
Come weep with me; past hope, past cure, past help!
FRI. L. Ah, Juliet, I already know thy grief;
It strains me past the compass of my wits:
I hear thou must, and nothing may prorogue it,
On Thursday next be married to this county.
JUL. Tell me not, friar, that thou hear'st of this,
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it:
If in thy wisdom thou canst give no help,
Do thou but call my resolution wise,

---

38 *evening mass*] evening prayer. Shakespeare probably forgot that, according to a 16th-century papal decree, mass in the evening or the afternoon was forbidden. It might only be said in the morning. It is not very likely that he knew, as commentators point out, that this established practice of Roman Christendom was at times disregarded in Verona Cathedral.

40 *entreat the time alone*] beg to be left alone.

45 *past cure*] Thus the First and Fifth Quartos. Other early editions read less pointedly *past care*. Cf. *L. L. L.*, V, ii, 28: "*past cure* is still past care," and *infra*, IV, v, 65.

And with this knife I'll help it presently.
God join'd my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands;
And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo's seal'd,
Shall be the label to another deed,
Or my true heart with treacherous revolt
Turn to another, this shall slay them both:
Therefore, out of thy long-experienced time,
Give me some present counsel; or, behold,
'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife
Shall play the umpire, arbitrating that
Which the commission of thy years and art
Could to no issue of true honour bring.
Be not so long to speak; I long to die,
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.
FRI. L. Hold, daughter: I do spy a kind of hope,
Which craves as desperate an execution
As that is desperate which we would prevent.
If, rather than to marry County Paris,
Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,
Then is it likely thou wilt undertake

54 *this knife*] Elizabethan ladies are said, without any positive evidence, to have worn knives on ordinary occasions at their girdles. Knives seem, however, to have formed part of a bride's ornaments on her wedding day. Cf. *Edward III*, II, ii, 173: "Here by my side doth hang my *wedding knives*." But the true explanation of Juliet's reference to the knife may well be that she had secreted the weapon, with which to do herself violence in case of an emergency. Cf. IV, iii, 23, *infra*.

*I'll help it presently*] I'll summarily cure the situation.

57 *the label to another deed*] A slip of parchment, technically called a label, attached to a legal deed the seal of the contracting parties.

62 *extremes*] desperate plight.

64 *commission*] authority.

A thing like death to chide away this shame,
That copest with death himself to 'scape from it;
And, if thou darest, I'll give thee remedy.

JUL. O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,
From off the battlements of yonder tower;
Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk
Where serpents are; chain me with roaring bears;
Or shut me nightly in a charnel-house,
O'er-cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,
With reeky shanks and yellow chapless skulls;
Or bid me go into a new-made grave,
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud;
Things that to hear them told, have made me tremble;
And I will do it without fear or doubt,
To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love.

FRI. L. Hold, then; go home, be merry, give consent
To marry Paris: Wednesday is to-morrow;
To-morrow night look that thou lie alone,
Let not thy nurse lie with thee in thy chamber:
Take thou this vial, being then in bed,
And this distilled liquor drink thou off:
When presently through all thy veins shall run
A cold and drowsy humour; for no pulse

78 *yonder*] Thus the First Quarto. The other early editions read *any*.

81 *shut*] Thus the First Quarto. The other early editions read *hide*.

83 *reeky . . . chapless*] malodorous . . . without the lower jaw. "Reechy" (*Hamlet*, III, iv, 184: "*reechy* kisses") is another form of "reeky."

94 *distilled*] Thus the First Quarto. The other early editions read *distilling*.

Shall keep his native progress, but surcease:
No warmth, no breath shall testify thou livest;
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade
To paly ashes; thy eyes' windows fall,
Like death, when he shuts up the day of life;
Each part, deprived of supple government,
Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death:
And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death
Thou shalt continue two and forty hours,
And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.
Now, when the bridegroom in the morning comes
To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead:
Then, as the manner of our country is,
In thy best robes uncover'd on the bier
Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault
Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.
In the mean time, against thou shalt awake,
Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift;
And hither shall he come: and he and I
Will watch thy waking, and that very night
Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.
And this shall free thee from this present shame,
If no inconstant toy nor womanish fear
Abate thy valour in the acting it.

JUL. Give me, give me! O, tell not me of fear!

97 *surcease*] stop, cease altogether.

110 *on the bier*] All the early editions, save the First Quarto, insert after these words an irrelevant line which is here omitted: *Be borne to buriall in thy kindreds graue.*

119 *no inconstant toy*] no fickle caprice. The expression is found in Brooke's Poem.

FRI. L. Hold; get you gone, be strong and prosperous
In this resolve: I'll send a friar with speed
To Mantua, with my letters to thy lord.
JUL. Love give me strength! and strength shall help afford.
Farewell, dear father! [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II — HALL IN CAPULET'S HOUSE

*Enter* CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, NURSE, *and two* Servingmen

CAP. So many guests invite as here are writ.
[*Exit First Servant.*
Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.
SEC. SERV. You shall have none ill, sir, for I 'll try if they can lick their fingers.
CAP. How canst thou try them so?
SEC. SERV. Marry, sir, 't is an ill cook that cannot lick his own fingers: therefore he that cannot lick his fingers goes not with me.
CAP. Go, be gone. [*Exit Sec. Servant.*
We shall be much unfurnish'd for this time. 10
What, is my daughter gone to Friar Laurence?
NURSE. Ay, forsooth.
CAP. Well, he may chance to do some good on her:
A peevish self-will'd harlotry it is.

---

6–7 *'t is an ill cook . . . fingers*] a familiar adage often quoted by Elizabethan writers.

14 *harlotry*] often used for minx, hussy, baggage.

*Enter* JULIET

NURSE. See where she comes from shrift with merry look.

CAP. How now, my headstrong! where have you been gadding?

JUL. Where I have learn'd me to repent the sin
Of disobedient opposition
To you and your behests, and am enjoin'd
By holy Laurence to fall prostrate here,
To beg your pardon: pardon, I beseech you!
Henceforward I am ever ruled by you.

CAP. Send for the county; go tell him of this:
I'll have this knot knit up to-morrow morning.

JUL. I met the youthful lord at Laurence' cell,
And gave him what becomed love I might,
Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

CAP. Why, I am glad on 't; this is well: stand up:
This is as 't should be. Let me see the county;
Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither.
Now, afore God, this reverend holy friar,
All our whole city is much bound to him.

JUL. Nurse, will you go with me into my closet,
To help me sort such needful ornaments
As you think fit to furnish me to-morrow?

LA. CAP. No, not till Thursday; there is time enough.

CAP. Go, nurse, go with her: we'll to church to-morrow. [*Exeunt Juliet and Nurse.*

LA. CAP. We shall be short in our provision:

26 *becomed*] becoming, fitting.

29 *county*] the count; see note on I, iii, 105, *supra*.

'T is now near night.
CAP. Tush, I will stir about,
And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife:
Go thou to Juliet, help to deck up her;
I'll not to bed to-night; let me alone;
I'll play the housewife for this once. What, ho!
They are all forth: well, I will walk myself
To County Paris, to prepare him up
Against to-morrow: my heart is wondrous light,
Since this same wayward girl is so reclaim'd. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE III — JULIET'S CHAMBER

*Enter* JULIET *and* Nurse

JUL. Ay, those attires are best: but, gentle nurse,
I pray thee, leave me to myself to-night;
For I have need of many orisons
To move the heavens to smile upon my state,
Which, well thou know'st, is cross and full of sin.

*Enter* LADY CAPULET

LA. CAP. What, are you busy, ho? need you my help?
JUL. No, madam; we have cull'd such necessaries
As are behoveful for our state to-morrow:
So please you, let me now be left alone,

41 *up*] an intensitive enclitic, as in line 45, *infra*, "prepare him *up*."
5 *cross*] perverse, wrong.

And let the nurse this night sit up with you,
For I am sure you have your hands full all
In this so sudden business.
LA. CAP. Good night:
Get thee to bed and rest, for thou hast need.
[*Exeunt Lady Capulet and Nurse.*
JUL. Farewell! God knows when we shall meet again.
I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,
That almost freezes up the heat of life:
I'll call them back again to comfort me.
Nurse! — What should she do here?
My dismal scene I needs must act alone.
Come, vial.
What if this mixture do not work at all?
Shall I be married then to-morrow morning?
No, no: this shall forbid it. Lie thou there.
[*Laying down a dagger.*
What if it be a poison, which the friar
Subtly hath minister'd to have me dead,
Lest in this marriage he should be dishonour'd,
Because he married me before to Romeo?
I fear it is: and yet, methinks, it should not,
For he hath still been tried a holy man.
How if, when I am laid into the tomb,
I wake before the time that Romeo

---

22 *to-morrow morning*] Thus the original editions, save the First Quarto, which reads *to the County.*

23 *Lie thou there*] See note on IV, i, 54, *supra.*

29 *tried*] proved. The First Quarto inserts after this line one which is omitted in the later editions: *I will not entertain so bad a thought.*

Come to redeem me? there's a fearful point.
Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?
Or, if I live, is it not very like,
The horrible conceit of death and night,
Together with the terror of the place,
As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,
Where for this many hundred years the bones
Of all my buried ancestors are pack'd;
Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,
Lies festering in his shroud; where, as they say,
At some hours in the night spirits resort;
Alack, alack, is it not like that I
So early waking, what with loathsome smells
And shrieks like mandrakes' torn out of the earth,
That living mortals hearing them run mad:
O, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,
Environed with all these hideous fears?
And madly play with my forefathers' joints?
And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud?
And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,
As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?
O, look! methinks I see my cousin's ghost
Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body

42 *but green in earth*] freshly buried.

47 *shrieks like mandrakes'*] The plant mandragora, which was popularly imagined from the shape of the root to resemble the human figure, was supposed when plucked from the ground to utter a shriek, which caused madness or even death in the hearer. Cf. *2 Hen. IV*, I, ii, 14.

Upon a rapier's point: stay, Tybalt, stay!
Romeo, I come! this do I drink to thee.
[*She falls upon her bed, within the curtains.*

## SCENE IV — HALL IN CAPULET'S HOUSE

*Enter* LADY CAPULET *and* Nurse

LA. CAP. Hold, take these keys, and fetch more spices, nurse.
NURSE. They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.

*Enter* CAPULET

CAP. Come, stir, stir, stir! the second cock hath crow'd,
The curfew-bell hath rung, 't is three o'clock:
Look to the baked meats, good Angelica:
Spare not for cost.
NURSE. Go, you cot-quean, go,

---

58 *Romeo . . . to thee*] Thus the First Quarto. The other early editions have the inferior reading *Romeo, Romeo, Romeo, heeres drinke, I drinke to thee.*

2 *the pastry*] the pastry kitchen; the place where the pastry was made.

4 *The curfew-bell*] Here clearly the morning bell, the matin-bell, which only rang the "curfew" at nine o'clock at night.

5 *baked meats*] baked foods, pies.

6 *cot-quean*] The word was ordinarily applied to a man who meddled in household affairs. The nurse, a privileged old servant, is clearly on terms of almost insolent familiarity with her master. It is unnecessary, with some editors, to transfer this speech to Lady Capulet.

Get you to bed; faith, you 'll be sick to-morrow
For this night's watching.
CAP. No, not a whit: what! I have watch'd ere now
All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.
LA. CAP. Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt in your time;
But I will watch you from such watching now.
[*Exeunt Lady Capulet and Nurse.*
CAP. A jealous-hood, a jealous-hood!

*Enter three or four* Servingmen, *with spits, and logs, and baskets*

Now, fellow,
What's there?
FIRST SERV. Things for the cook, sir, but I know not what.
CAP. Make haste, make haste. [*Exit First Serv.*] Sirrah, fetch drier logs:
Call Peter, he will show thee where they are.
SEC. SERV. I have a head, sir, that will find out logs,
And never trouble Peter for the matter.
CAP. Mass, and well said; a merry whoreson, ha!
Thou shalt be logger-head. [*Exit Sec. Serv.*] Good faith, 't is day:
The county will be here with music straight,

11 *a mouse-hunt*] a hunter after women.

13 *A jealous-hood*] This word is only hyphened in the Fourth Folio, and the hyphen may well be dispensed with. Probably Capulet means that his wife peers with jealous eyes from under her hood, typical apparel of a woman. "Jealous-hood" in the sense of "jealousy" has no authority, though such a word might possibly be modelled on "woman-hood."

For so he said he would. [*Music within.*] I hear him near.
Nurse! Wife! What, ho! What, nurse, I say!

*Re-enter* Nurse

Go waken Juliet, go and trim her up;
I 'll go and chat with Paris: hie, make haste,
Make haste: the bridegroom he is come already:
Make haste, I say. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE V — JULIET'S CHAMBER

*Enter* Nurse

NURSE. Mistress! what, mistress! Juliet! fast, I warrant her, she:
Why, lamb! why, lady! fie, you slug-a-bed!
Why, love, I say! madam! sweet-heart! why, bride!
What, not a word? you take your pennyworths now;
Sleep for a week; for the next night, I warrant,
The County Paris hath set up his rest
That you shall rest but little. God forgive me,
Marry, and amen, how sound is she asleep!

1 *fast*] fast asleep.

4 *you take . . . now*] a colloquial phrase meaning "You get full value for your money."

6 *set up his rest*] an expression drawn from the popular card game of "primero" (of Spanish origin). The words meant technically "positively to declare the sum that one would finally bet on one's hand." Hence the phrase came to mean "to take a final resolution or determination."

I needs must wake her. Madam, madam, madam!
Ay, let the county take you in your bed;
He 'll fright you up, i' faith. Will it not be?
[*Undraws the curtains.*
What, dress'd! and in your clothes! and down again!
I must needs wake you. Lady! lady! lady!
Alas, alas! Help, help! my lady 's dead!
O, well-a-day, that ever I was born!
Some aqua-vitæ, ho! My lord! my lady!

*Enter* LADY CAPULET

LA. CAP. What noise is here?
NURSE. O lamentable day!
LA. CAP. What is the matter?
NURSE. Look, look! O heavy day!
LA. CAP. O me, O me! My child, my only life,
Revive, look up, or I will die with thee.
Help, help! call help.

*Enter* CAPULET

CAP. For shame, bring Juliet forth; her lord is come.
NURSE. She 's dead, deceased, she 's dead; alack the day!
LA. CAP. Alack the day, she 's dead, she 's dead, she 's dead!
CAP. Ha! let me see her. Out, alas! she 's cold;
Her blood is settled and her joints are stiff;

---

12 *down again*] still in bed. Cf. III, v, 66, *supra*.
16 *aqua-vitæ*] Cf. III, ii, 88, *supra*, and note.

Life and these lips have long been separated.
Death lies on her like an untimely frost
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.
NURSE. O lamentable day!
LA. CAP. O woeful time!
CAP. Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me wail,
Ties up my tongue and will not let me speak.

*Enter* FRIAR LAURENCE *and* PARIS, *with* Musicians

FRI. L. Come, is the bride ready to go to church?
CAP. Ready to go, but never to return.
O son, the night before thy wedding-day
Hath death lain with thy wife: see, there she lies,
Flower as she was, deflowered by him.
Death is my son-in-law, death is my heir;
My daughter he hath wedded: I will die,
And leave him all; life, living, all is Death's.
PAR. Have I thought long to see this morning's face,
And doth it give me such a sight as this?
LA. CAP. Accurst, unhappy, wretched, hateful day!
Most miserable hour that e'er time saw
In lasting labour of his pilgrimage!
But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,
But one thing to rejoice and solace in,
And cruel death hath catch'd it from my sight!
NURSE. O woe! O woeful, woeful, woeful day!

---

36 *see*] Thus the First Quarto, and the Second and later Folios. The other early editions omit the word.

41 *thought long*] wished eagerly.

Most lamentable day, most woeful day,
That ever, ever, I did yet behold!
O day! O day! O day! O hateful day!
Never was seen so black a day as this:
O woeful day, O woeful day!
PAR. Beguiled, divorced, wronged, spited, slain!
Most detestable death, by thee beguiled,
By cruel cruel thee quite overthrown!
O love! O life! not life, but love in death!
CAP. Despised, distressed, hated, martyr'd, kill'd!
Uncomfortable time, why camest thou now
To murder, murder our solemnity?
O child! O child! my soul, and not my child!
Dead art thou! Alack, my child is dead;
And with my child my joys are buried!
FRI. L. Peace, ho, for shame! confusion's cure lives not
In these confusions. Heaven and yourself
Had part in this fair maid; now heaven hath all,
And all the better is it for the maid:
Your part in her you could not keep from death;
But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.
The most you sought was her promotion,
For 't was your heaven she should be advanced:
And weep ye now, seeing she is advanced
Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?
O, in this love, you love your child so ill,
That you run mad, seeing that she is well:

---

65 *cure*] Theobald's correction of the original reading *care*. Cf. IV, i, 45, *supra*.

76 *she is well*] a common expression for "she is dead." Cf. V, i, 17, *infra*.

She's not well married that lives married long,
But she 's best married that dies married young.
Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary
On this fair corse, and, as the custom is,
In all her best array bear her to church:
For though fond nature bids us all lament,
Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

CAP. All things that we ordained festival,
Turn from their office to black funeral:
Our instruments to melancholy bells;
Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast;
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change;
Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,
And all things change them to the contrary.

FRI. L. Sir, go you in; and, madam, go with him;
And go, Sir Paris; every one prepare
To follow this fair corse unto her grave:
The heavens do lour upon you for some ill;
Move them no more by crossing their high will.

[*Exeunt Capulet, Lady Capulet, Paris, and Friar.*

FIRST MUS. Faith, we may put up our pipes, and be gone.

NURSE. Honest good fellows, ah, put up, put up;
For, well you know, this is a pitiful case. [*Exit.*

FIRST MUS. Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

---

79 *your rosemary*] Sprigs of this plant were commonly carried by mourners at funerals, and also occasionally figured at weddings. It was emblematic of remembrance. Cf. II, iv, 200, *supra*.

*Enter* PETER

PET. Musicians, O, musicians, "Heart's ease, Heart's ease:" O, an you will have me live, play "Heart's ease."

FIRST MUS. Why "Heart's ease"?

PET. O, musicians, because my heart itself plays "My heart is full of woe:" O, play me some merry dump, to comfort me.

FIRST MUS. Not a dump we; 't is no time to play now.

PET. You will not then?

FIRST MUS. No.

PET. I will then give it you soundly.

FIRST MUS. What will you give us?

PET. No money, on my faith, but the gleek; I will give you the minstrel.

---

100 (stage direction) *Enter* PETER] Thus the Fourth and Fifth Quartos and the Folios. The First Quarto reads "Enter Serving man," and the Second and Third Quartos "Enter Will Kemp" — clearly the name of the well-known actor, who created this part. Will Kemp figures similarly in the original editions of *Much Ado*, Act II, Sc. ii, where he filled the part of Dogberry.

100 "*Heart's ease*"] The name of a popular melody said to be composed about 1570. It is still extant. See Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Time*.

103–104 "*My heart . . . woe*"] The burden of the first stanza of "A pleasant new ballad of two lovers," an original copy of which is in the Pepysian Library at Magdalene College, Cambridge.

104 *dump*] properly a mournful tune. Cf. *Two Gent.*, III, ii, 85: "a deploring *dump*."

111–112 *the gleek . . . minstrel*] "To give one the gleek" was a common phrase for "to make a jest at one's expense," "to play a trick on."

FIRST MUS. Then will I give you the serving-creature.

PET. Then will I lay the serving-creature's dagger on your pate. I will carry no crotchets: I'll re you, I'll fa you; do you note me?

FIRST MUS. An you re us and fa us, you note us.

SEC. MUS. Pray you, put up your dagger, and put out your wit.

PET. Then have at you with my wit! I will dry-beat you with an iron wit, and put up my iron dagger. Answer me like men: 122

> "When griping grief the heart doth wound
> And doleful dumps the mind oppress,
> Then music with her silver sound"—

why "silver sound"? why "music with her silver sound"? — What say you, Simon Catling?

---

(The verb "to gleek" was often used by Shakespeare in the sense of "to make a jest at.") Gleek apparently was punningly associated by Peter with the word "glee" (*i. e.*, song). Hence he scornfully forms the phrase "give the minstrel," *i. e.*, insult a man, by calling him a minstrel. There is no authority for the common assertion that "gleeke-men" was an Elizabethan variant of "gleemen."

113 *give . . . serving-creature*] insult by calling you a creature in service.

115 *I will carry no crotchets*] a punning adaptation of the phrase "I'll carry no coals," *i. e.*, I'll stand no insults. Cf. I, i, 1, *supra*. There is an obvious pun on "crotchets" in the double sense of "musical notes" and "whims."

120 *dry-beat*] thrash or cudgel without drawing blood. Cf. III, i, 77, *supra*.

123–125 *When griping grief . . . sound*] This is quoted with the additional line given at line 139, *infra*, from a poem by Richard Edwards headed "In Commendation of Musique," in *The Paradise of Dainty Devises*, 1576. The song is reprinted in Percy's *Reliques*.

127 *Catling*] The name of a lutestring made of catgut.

FIRST MUS. Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

PET. Pretty! What say you, Hugh Rebeck?

SEC. MUS. I say, "silver sound," because musicians sound for silver.

PET. Pretty too! What say you, James Soundpost?

THIRD MUS. Faith, I know not what to say.

PET. O, I cry you mercy; you are the singer: I will say for you. It is "music with her silver sound," because musicians have no gold for sounding:

> "Then music with her silver sound
> With speedy help doth lend redress." [*Exit.*

FIRST MUS. What a pestilent knave is this same!

SEC. MUS. Hang him, Jack! Come, we'll in here; tarry for the mourners, and stay dinner. [*Exeunt.*

---

130 *Rebeck*] The name of a three-stringed lyre or viol.

130–133 *Pretty . . . Pretty too*] Thus the First Quarto. The Second Quarto reads *Prates . . . Prates to.* Other early editions read *Pratest . . . Pratest to. Pratest* (*i. e.*, thou talkest nonsense) . . . *Pratest too!* may possibly be right.

133 *Soundpost*] a nickname for a musician. A sound-post was said to be properly a peg or stand, which gave support to a stringed instrument. Others interpret the word as a sounding-board.

## ACT FIFTH — SCENE I — MANTUA

*MANTUA — A STREET*

*Enter* ROMEO

ROMEO

F I MAY TRUST THE flattering truth of sleep,
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand:
My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne,
And all this day an unaccustom'd spirit
Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.
I dreamt my lady came and found me dead —
Strange dream, that gives a dead man leave to think! —
And breathed such life with kisses in my lips,
That I revived and was an emperor.

1 *the flattering truth of sleep*] a vision which gives the impression of truth. *Truth* is the reading of all the early editions, save the First Quarto, which gives *eye*, a somewhat simpler expression.

3 *bosom's lord*] the god of love, which dominates the heart.

Ah me! how sweet is love itself possess'd,
When but love's shadows are so rich in joy!

*Enter* BALTHASAR, *booted*

News from Verona! How now, Balthasar!
Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?
How doth my lady? Is my father well?
How fares my Juliet? that I ask again;
For nothing can be ill, if she be well.

BAL. Then she is well, and nothing can be ill:
Her body sleeps in Capels' monument,
And her immortal part with angels lives.
I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault,
And presently took post to tell it you:
O, pardon me for bringing these ill news,
Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

ROM. Is it e'en so? then I defy you, stars!
Thou know'st my lodging: get me ink and paper,
And hire post-horses; I will hence to-night.

BAL. I do beseech you, sir, have patience:
Your looks are pale and wild, and do import
Some misadventure.

ROM. Tush, thou art deceived:
Leave me, and do the thing I bid thee do.
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

BAL. No, my good lord.

---

17 *she is well*] euphemism for "she is dead." Cf. IV, v, 76, *supra*.

24 *defy*] Thus the First Quarto. The other early editions read *deny*.

27 *I do beseech . . . patience*] Thus all the early editions save the First Quarto, which reads *Pardon me sir, I dare not leave you thus.*

ROM. No matter: get thee gone,
And hire those horses; I'll be with thee straight.
*[Exit Balthasar.*
Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night.
Let's see for means: — O mischief, thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!
I do remember an apothecary,
And hereabouts a' dwells, which late I noted
In tatter'd weeds, with overwhelming brows,
Culling of simples; meagre were his looks;
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones:
And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,
An alligator stuff'd and other skins
Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves
A beggarly account of empty boxes,
Green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds,
Remnants of packthread and old cakes of roses,
Were thinly scatter'd, to make up a show.
Noting this penury, to myself I said,
An if a man did need a poison now,
Whose sale is present death in Mantua,
Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.
O, this same thought did but forerun my need,
And this same needy man must sell it me.
As I remember, this should be the house:

---

39 *overwhelming*] overhanging, projecting.
40 *simples*] medicinal herbs.
43 *An alligator stuff'd*] A common piece of furniture in an apothecary's shop.
45 *account*] array.
51 *present death*] instant death.

Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.
What, ho! apothecary!

*Enter* Apothecary

AP. Who calls so loud?
ROM. Come hither, man. I see that thou art poor;
Hold, there is forty ducats: let me have
A dram of poison; such soon-speeding gear
As will disperse itself through all the veins,
That the life-weary taker may fall dead,
And that the trunk may be discharged of breath
As violently as hasty powder fired
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.
AP. Such mortal drugs I have; but Mantua's law
Is death to any he that utters them.
ROM. Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness,
And fear'st to die? famine is in thy cheeks,
Need and oppression starveth in thy eyes,
Contempt and beggary hangs upon thy back,
The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law:
The world affords no law to make thee rich;
Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.
AP. My poverty, but not my will, consents.
ROM. I pay thy poverty and not thy will.
AP. Put this in any liquid thing you will,

60 *soon-speeding gear*] stuff that will quickly operate.
67 *utters*] sells.
70 *starveth in thy eyes*] give to thine eyes a look of starvation.
76 *I pay*] Thus the First Quarto. The other early editions read less effectively *I pray*, *i. e.*, I address my request to.

And drink it off; and, if you had the strength
Of twenty men, it would dispatch you straight.
ROM. There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls,
Doing more murder in this loathsome world,
Than these poor compounds that thou mayst not sell:
I sell thee poison, thou hast sold me none.
Farewell: buy food, and get thyself in flesh.
Come, cordial and not poison, go with me
To Juliet's grave; for there must I use thee. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II — FRIAR LAURENCE'S CELL

*Enter* FRIAR JOHN

FRI. J. Holy Franciscan friar! brother, ho!

*Enter* FRIAR LAURENCE

FRI. L. This same should be the voice of Friar John.
Welcome from Mantua: what says Romeo?
Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.
FRI. J. Going to find a bare-foot brother out,
One of our order, to associate me,
Here in this city visiting the sick,
And finding him, the searchers of the town,
Suspecting that we both were in a house
Where the infectious pestilence did reign,
Seal'd up the doors and would not let us forth;
So that my speed to Mantua there was stay'd.

6 *associate*] accompany.

11 *Seal'd up the doors*] It was the duty of the constables in Elizabethan London to seal up all houses inhabited by sufferers from the plague,

FRI. L. Who bare my letter then to Romeo?
FRI. J. I could not send it, — here it is again,—
Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,
So fearful were they of infection.
FRI. L. Unhappy fortune! by my brotherhood,
The letter was not nice, but full of charge
Of dear import, and the neglecting it
May do much danger. Friar John, go hence;
Get me an iron crow and bring it straight
Unto my cell.
FRI. J. Brother, I'll go and bring it thee. [*Exit.*
FRI. L. Now must I to the monument alone;
Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake:
She will beshrew me much that Romeo
Hath had no notice of these accidents;
But I will write again to Mantua,
And keep her at my cell till Romeo come:
Poor living corse, closed in a dead man's tomb! [*Exit.*

## SCENE III — A CHURCHYARD; IN IT A MONUMENT BELONGING TO THE CAPULETS

*Enter* PARIS *and his* Page, *bearing flowers and a torch*

PAR. Give me thy torch, boy: hence, and stand aloof:
Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.

---

so as to prevent the patients or their housemates from coming abroad to spread the infection.

18 *not nice*] not unimportant, not trivial. Cf. III, i, 151, *supra*.

26 *beshrew*] blame, curse.

Under yond yew-trees lay thee all along,
Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground;
So shall no foot upon the churchyard tread,
Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves,
But thou shalt hear it: whistle then to me,
As signal that thou hear'st something approach.
Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.
PAGE. [*Aside*] I am almost afraid to stand alone
Here in the churchyard; yet I will adventure. [*Retires.*
PAR. Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew, —
O woe! thy canopy is dust and stones; —
Which with sweet water nightly I will dew,
Or, wanting that, with tears distill'd by moans:
The obsequies that I for thee will keep
Nightly shall be to strew thy grave and weep.
[*The Page whistles.*
The boy gives warning something doth approach.
What cursed foot wanders this way to-night,
To cross my obsequies and true love's rite?
What, with a torch! Muffle me, night, a while. [*Retires.*

*Enter* ROMEO *and* BALTHASAR, *with a torch, mattock, &c.*

ROM. Give me that mattock and the wrenching iron.
Hold, take this letter; early in the morning

12–17 *Sweet flower . . . and weep*] These lines are in the six-line stanza of *Venus and Adonis*. Cf. I, ii, 45–50 and note.

22 (stage direction) *Enter . . .* BALTHASAR] Thus the Fourth and Fifth Quartos. The earlier editions substitute "Peter" for "Balthasar." The confusion is possibly due to the fact that the two parts were filled by the same actor.

See thou deliver it to my lord and father.
Give me the light: upon thy life, I charge thee,
Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof,
And do not interrupt me in my course.
Why I descend into this bed of death
Is partly to behold my lady's face,
But chiefly to take thence from her dead finger
A precious ring, a ring that I must use
In dear employment: therefore hence, be gone:
But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry
In what I farther shall intend to do,
By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint
And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs:
The time and my intents are savage-wild,
More fierce and more inexorable far
Than empty tigers or the roaring sea.

BAL. I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

ROM. So shalt thou show me friendship. Take thou that:
Live, and be prosperous: and farewell, good fellow.

BAL. [*Aside*] For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout:
His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt. [*Retires.*

ROM. Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,
Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,
And in despite I'll cram thee with more food.
[*Opens the tomb.*

PAR. This is that banish'd haughty Montague

32 *dear*] momentous.
33 *jealous*] suspicious.

That murder'd my love's cousin, with which grief,
It is supposed, the fair creature died,
And here is come to do some villanous shame
To the dead bodies: I will apprehend him.
[*Comes forward.*
Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague!
Can vengeance be pursued further than death?
Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee:
Obey, and go with me; for thou must die.
ROM. I must indeed, and therefore came I hither.
Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man;
Fly hence and leave me: think upon these gone;
Let them affright thee. I beseech thee, youth,
Put not another sin upon my head,
By urging me to fury: O, be gone!
By heaven, I love thee better than myself,
For I come hither arm'd against myself:
Stay not, be gone: live, and hereafter say,
A madman's mercy bid thee run away.
PAR. I do defy thy conjurations
And apprehend thee for a felon here.
ROM. Wilt thou provoke me? then have at thee, boy!
[*They fight.*
PAGE. O Lord, they fight! I will go call the watch.
[*Exit.*
PAR. O, I am slain! [*Falls.*] If thou be merciful,
Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet. [*Dies.*
ROM. In faith, I will. Let me peruse this face:

68 *conjurations*] earnest entreaties. Thus the First Quarto. The Second Quarto has *commiration*, and the rest of the early editions *commiseration*, readings which may well be rejected.

Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris!
What said my man, when my betossed soul
Did not attend him as we rode? I think
He told me Paris should have married Juliet:
Said he not so? or did I dream it so?
Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,
To think it was so? O, give me thy hand,
One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!
I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave;
A grave? O, no, a lantern, slaughter'd youth;
For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
This vault a feasting presence full of light.
Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interr'd.
[*Laying Paris in the monument.*
How oft when men are at the point of death
Have they been merry! which their keepers call
A lightning before death: O, how may I
Call this a lightning? O my love! my wife!
Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath,
Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty:
Thou art not conquer'd; beauty's ensign yet
Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
And death's pale flag is not advanced there.
Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?
O, what more favour can I do to thee

84 *lantern*] used, with a punning suggestion, in the architectural sense of a turret, pierced by many windows, which in cathedrals often surmount the intersection of nave and transepts. There is a peculiarly beautiful specimen of a lantern in Ely Cathedral.

86 *a feasting presence*] a presence chamber or room of state, fit for high festival.

Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain
To sunder his that was thine enemy?
Forgive me, cousin! Ah, dear Juliet,
Why art thou yet so fair? shall I believe
That unsubstantial death is amorous,
And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
Thee here in dark to be his paramour?
For fear of that, I still will stay with thee,
And never from this palace of dim night
Depart again: here, here will I remain
With worms that are thy chamber-maids; O, here
Will I set up my everlasting rest,
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
From this world-wearied flesh. Eyes, look your last!
Arms, take your last embrace! and, lips, O you
The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss
A dateless bargain to engrossing death!
Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavoury guide!
Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark.
Here's to my love! [*Drinks.*] O true apothecary!
Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die. [*Dies.*

110 *set up . . . rest*] An adaptation of the expression "set up one's rest." Cf. IV, v, 6, *supra*, and note.

115 *A dateless bargain . . . death*] An everlasting bargain with death which engrosses or acquires all things. For *dateless*, cf. Sonnet xxx, 6: "death's *dateless* night."

116 *conduct*] conductor, guide. Cf. III, i, 121, *supra*, and *Tempest*, V, i, 243–244: "more than nature Was ever *conduct* of."

*Enter, at the other end of the churchyard,* FRIAR LAURENCE, *with a lantern, crow, and spade*

FRI. L. Saint Francis be my speed! how oft to-night
Have my old feet stumbled at graves! Who's there?
BAL. Here's one, a friend, and one that knows you well.
FRI. L. Bliss be upon you! Tell me, good my friend,
What torch is yond that vainly lends his light
To grubs and eyeless skulls? as I discern,
It burneth in the Capels' monument.
BAL. It doth so, holy sir; and there's my master,
One that you love.
FRI. L. Who is it?
BAL. Romeo.
FRI. L. How long hath he been there?
BAL. Full half an hour.
FRI. L. Go with me to the vault.
BAL. I dare not, sir: 131
My master knows not but I am gone hence;
And fearfully did menace me with death,
If I did stay to look on his intents.
FRI. L. Stay, then; I'll go alone: fear comes upon me;
O, much I fear some ill unlucky thing.
BAL. As I did sleep under this yew-tree here,
I dreamt my master and another fought,
And that my master slew him.
FRI. L. Romeo! [*Advances.*

122 *stumbled at graves*] An accident of ill omen.
137 *yew-tree*] Pope's correction of the original reading *young tree.*

Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains
The stony entrance of this sepulchre?
What mean these masterless and gory swords
To lie discolour'd by this place of peace? [*Enters the tomb.*
Romeo! O, pale! Who else? what, Paris too?
And steep'd in blood? Ah, what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!
The lady stirs. [*Juliet wakes.*
JUL. O comfortable friar! where is my lord?
I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am: where is my Romeo? [*Noise within.*
FRI. L. I hear some noise. Lady, come from that nest
Of death, contagion and unnatural sleep:
A greater power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents: come, come away:
Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead;
And Paris too: come, I'll dispose of thee
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns:
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming;
Come, go, good Juliet; I dare no longer stay.
JUL. Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.
[*Exit Fri. L.*
What's here? a cup, closed in my true love's hand?
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end:
O churl! drunk all, and left no friendly drop
To help me after? I will kiss thy lips;

---

148 *comfortable*] giving comfort, comforting. Cf. *Lear*, I, iv, 305–306: "a daughter . . . kind and *comfortable*."
162 *timeless*] untimely.

Haply some poison yet doth hang on them,
To make me die with a restorative. [*Kisses him.*
Thy lips are warm.

FIRST WATCH. [*Within*] Lead, boy: which way?

JUL. Yea, noise? then I'll be brief. O happy dagger! [*Snatching Romeo's dagger.*
This is thy sheath [*Stabs herself*]; there rust, and let me die. [*Falls on Romeo's body, and dies.*

*Enter* Watch, *with the* Page *of* PARIS

PAGE. This is the place; there, where the torch doth burn.

FIRST WATCH. The ground is bloody; search about the churchyard:
Go, some of you, whoe'er you find attach.
Pitiful sight! here lies the county slain;
And Juliet bleeding, warm, and newly dead,
Who here hath lain this two days buried.
Go, tell the prince: run to the Capulets:
Raise up the Montagues: some others search:
We see the ground whereon these woes do lie;
But the true ground of all these piteous woes
We cannot without circumstance descry.

*Re-enter some of the* Watch, *with* BALTHASAR

SEC. WATCH. Here's Romeo's man; we found him in the churchyard.

169 *rust*] Thus all the original editions save the First Quarto, which has the simpler reading *rest*.

179 *the true ground*] the real source, or origin.

180 *circumstance*] details, detailed information. Cf. II, v, 36, *supra*: "stay the *circumstance*."

FIRST WATCH. Hold him in safety, till the prince come hither.

*Re-enter* FRIAR LAURENCE, *and another* Watchman

THIRD WATCH. Here is a friar, that trembles, sighs and weeps:
We took this mattock and this spade from him,
As he was coming from this churchyard's side.
FIRST WATCH. A great suspicion: stay the friar too.

*Enter the* Prince *and* Attendants

PRINCE. What misadventure is so early up,
That calls our person from our morning rest?

*Enter* CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, *and others*

CAP. What should it be that they so shriek abroad?
LA. CAP. The people in the street cry Romeo,
Some Juliet, and some Paris, and all run
With open outcry toward our monument.
PRINCE. What fear is this which startles in our ears?
FIRST WATCH. Sovereign, here lies the County Paris slain;
And Romeo dead; and Juliet, dead before,
Warm and new kill'd.
PRINCE. Search, seek, and know how this foul murder comes.
FIRST WATCH. Here is a friar, and slaughter'd Romeo's man,
With instruments upon them fit to open
These dead men's tombs.

CAP. O heavens! O wife, look how our daughter bleeds!
This dagger hath mista'en, for, lo, his house
Is empty on the back of Montague,
And it mis-sheathed in my daughter's bosom!
LA. CAP. O me! this sight of death is as a bell
That warns my old age to a sepulchre.

*Enter* MONTAGUE *and others*

PRINCE. Come, Montague; for thou art early up,
To see thy son and heir more early down.
MON. Alas, my liege, my wife is dead to-night;
Grief of my son's exile hath stopp'd her breath: 210
What further woe conspires against mine age?
PRINCE. Look, and thou shalt see.
MON. O thou untaught! what manners is in this,
To press before thy father to a grave?
PRINCE. Seal up the mouth of outrage for a while,
Till we can clear these ambiguities,

---

202 *This dagger . . . his house*] This dagger has fallen into error, is misplaced, for lo, its sheath or scabbard.

203 *on the back*] Sheaths of daggers were worn at a man's back, not at his side.

204 *it mis-sheathed*] Thus the Second Quarto, *is* being implied after *it* (*i.e.*, the dagger). The other early editions read *is mis-sheathed;* the subject being *This dagger* of line 202 and the intervening words, "for, lo, his house . . . Montague," forming an independent parenthesis.

210 *her breath*] The First Quarto interpolates the line *And young Benvolio is deceased too*, which the other editions omit.

215 *outrage*] excess of rage, fury.

And know their spring, their head, their true descent;
And then will I be general of your woes,
And lead you even to death: meantime forbear,
And let mischance be slave to patience.
Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

FRI. L. I am the greatest, able to do least,
Yet most suspected, as the time and place
Doth make against me, of this direful murder;
And here I stand, both to impeach and purge
Myself condemned and myself excused.

PRINCE. Then say at once what thou dost know in this.

FRI. L. I will be brief, for my short date of breath
Is not so long as is a tedious tale.
Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet;
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife:
I married them; and their stol'n marriage-day
Was Tybalt's dooms-day, whose untimely death
Banish'd the new-made bridegroom from this city;
For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pined.
You, to remove that siege of grief from her,
Betroth'd and would have married her perforce
To County Paris: then comes she to me,
And with wild looks bid me devise some mean
To rid her from this second marriage,
Or in my cell there would she kill herself.
Then gave I her, so tutor'd by my art,
A sleeping potion; which so took effect

221 *the parties of suspicion*] the suspected parties or persons.

As I intended, for it wrought on her
The form of death: meantime I writ to Romeo,
That he should hither come as this dire night,
To help to take her from her borrow'd grave,
Being the time the potion's force should cease.
But he which bore my letter, Friar John,
Was stay'd by accident, and yesternight
Return'd my letter back. Then all alone
At the prefixed hour of her waking
Came I to take her from her kindred's vault,
Meaning to keep her closely at my cell
Till I conveniently could send to Romeo:
But when I came, some minute ere the time
Of her awaking, here untimely lay
The noble Paris and true Romeo dead.
She wakes, and I entreated her come forth,
And bear this work of heaven with patience:
But then a noise did scare me from the tomb,
And she too desperate would not go with me,
But, as it seems, did violence on herself.
All this I know; and to the marriage
Her nurse is privy: and, if aught in this
Miscarried by my fault, let my old life
Be sacrificed some hour before his time
Unto the rigour of severest law.

PRINCE. We still have known thee for a holy man.
Where's Romeo's man? what can he say in this?

246 *as this dire night*] "as" is redundant. Cf. *Jul. Cæsar*, V, i, 71–72: "This is my birthday; *as* this very day Was Cassius born."

254 *closely*] secretly.

BAL. I brought my master news of Juliet's death,
And then in post he came from Mantua
To this same place, to this same monument.
This letter he early bid me give his father,
And threaten'd me with death, going in the vault,
If I departed not and left him there.
PRINCE. Give me the letter; I will look on it.
Where is the county's page, that raised the watch?
Sirrah, what made your master in this place?
PAGE. He came with flowers to strew his lady's grave;
And bid me stand aloof, and so I did:
Anon comes one with light to ope the tomb;
And by and by my master drew on him;
And then I ran away to call the watch.
PRINCE. This letter doth make good the friar's words,
Their course of love, the tidings of her death:
And here he writes that he did buy a poison
Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal
Came to this vault to die and lie with Juliet.
Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!
And I, for winking at your discords too,
Have lost a brace of kinsmen: all are punish'd.

---

272 *in post*] in post haste.
279 *what made your master*] what was your master's business.
283 *by and by*] immediately. Cf. II, ii, 151, III, i, 167, III, iii, 76, *supra*.
294 *a brace of kinsmen*] Mercutio and Paris. Cf. III, i, 106, 142, *supra*, where the prince's kinship with Mercutio is mentioned. Paris, though

CAP. O brother Montague, give me thy hand:
This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
Can I demand.
MON. But I can give thee more:
For I will raise her statue in pure gold;
That whiles Verona by that name is known,
There shall no figure at such rate be set
As that of true and faithful Juliet.
CAP. As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie;
Poor sacrifices of our enmity!
PRINCE. A glooming peace this morning with it brings;
The sun for sorrow will not show his head:
Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things;
Some shall be pardon'd and some punished:
For never was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo. [*Exeunt.*

described as "of noble parentage" III, v, 180, and as "Mercutio's kinsman," V, iii, 75, is not elsewhere more specifically described as related to the prince.

304–309 *A glooming peace . . . her Romeo*] These lines form a sixain in the stanza of *Venus and Adonis*. Cf. I, ii, 45–50, and note.

307 *Some shall . . . some punished*] In Brooke's Poem varied penalties are allotted to many of the surviving actors in the tragedy. The nurse is banished for concealing Juliet's marriage; the apothecary is hanged; Friar Laurence is suffered to retire to a hermitage, where he dies tranquilly six years afterwards; Romeo's servant is pardoned on the ground that he merely acted in obedience to his master's orders.

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# THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
# WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

WITH ANNOTATIONS AND
A GENERAL INTRODUCTION
BY SIDNEY LEE

VOLUME XIV

## TITUS ANDRONICUS

WITH A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION BY BRANDER MATTHEWS
AND AN ORIGINAL FRONTISPIECE BY PAUL WOODROOFE

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# INTRODUCTION

AS a result of recent advances in scientific method, the students of the history of the various arts have been led of late to consider more carefully the origin of species, — the *évolution des genres*, as M. Ferdinand Brunetière has termed it. In the art of literature, more particularly, we recognise now, as never so clearly before, the delimitations of the several species: and in fiction, for example, we have at last laid hold of the essential difference between the novel and the short-story, a difference not so much in mere length as in aim and in scope. So in the novel itself we now perceive several varieties, each having its own pronounced characteristics, — the picaresque romance, for one, and the novel-with-a-purpose, for another.

In no department of literature have more distinct and easily identifiable forms been evolved than in the drama. As we study the long history of the stage, we can hardly help remarking that now and again special circumstances have brought about the development of a species of play, peculiar to the theatre of a single country and of a single century. The form having been produced by local and temporary conditions will not be discoverable elsewhere. One such species was the Greek lyrical-burlesque, which flourished exuberantly only during the early years of Aristophanes. Another was the Italian comedy-of-masks, as it had crystallised itself in the days when the young Molière was serving his apprenticeship as a playwright. For a third example, we might take the strange kind of play that failed to establish itself in the eighteenth century, — the comedy which decorously endeavoured to avoid the comic and which was known in England as sentimental-comedy and in France as *la comédie larmoyante.*

No dramatic species has more marked characteristics or is more readily recognisable than the tragedy-of-blood which sprang up in the English theatre in the spacious days of Elizabeth when the drama was beginning to burgeon forth with incomparable vigour and variety. The typical tragedy-of-blood, and the one which gained and retained the broadest popularity, was the "Spanish Tragedy" of Thomas Kyd. But the wisest, the deepest, and the most moving of Shakespeare's plays, conformed in its earlier drafts to this type; and even in the final version of "Hamlet" the chief characteristics of the

more primitive form are still plainly visible. In "Titus Andronicus" we have a tragedy-of-blood with all the artistic grossness of the species and with all its blatant crudity.

The tragedy-of-blood was a play which dealt with a sanguinary theme and in which the author was seeking not so much to purge the souls of the spectators with terror as to shock their nerves with horror on horror's head accumulated. It was far more atrocious in its butcheries than any raw-head-and-bloody-bones melodrama ever to be seen in even the cheapest and lowest theatres of the twentieth century. It was always a tale of revenge, — of revenge nursed as a duty, seized with delight, and gloated over in every one of its ghastly details of torture, mutilation, and murder. It was often endowed with a ghost who came again and again, either to fright the one who had wrought the wrong or to urge on to vengeance the one who was devoted to the duty of retribution. It was likely also to have at least one deeply dyed villain of wanton malignity and incomparable perversity, — a character which the Elizabethans made free to describe as "Machiavellian."

Whatever its defects of technic and its deficiencies of taste, the tragedy-of-blood was of great importance in the development of the English drama; for it was seemingly the connecting link between the loosely knit chronicle-play which probably preceded it and the full-orbed tragedy which soon followed. However inferior the tragedy-of-blood may be to the more imaginative tragedy which it made possible, there is no doubt that

it was superior dramaturgically to the shapeless and fragmentary pieces which it displaced. The chronicle-play was little more than a panorama of incidents in the life of a hero; and it was rarely able to present vigorously even the more striking moments of his career. The tragedy-of-blood had a plot, which is just what the nerveless chronicle-play lacked. The plot might be rude and artless, but it was truly dramatic in that it presented a struggle, which is ever the indispensable essential of the drama.

To the chief figure of the chronicle-play, things merely happened; and often he was in no way responsible for their happening. To the chief figure of the tragedy-of-blood an opportunity was given to exercise his will. However unworthy his resolve and however puerile his acts, he was at least a man who knew what he wanted and who strove against every obstacle to accomplish his desire. The untiring energy of the Elizabethans, their stern determination, their reckless disregard of consequences, — these are all revealed abundantly in the tragedy-of-blood.

The origin of the tragedy-of-blood may be a little obscure, but it is not difficult to surmise. Certain Italian poets hugely despising the actual theatre of their own time and especially that of their own language, discovered in the unacted and unactable plays of Seneca their ideal of a true drama. Enjoying the chilly horrors and the swelling rhetoric to be found in the Latin adaptations of the great Greek tragedies, these Italian poets prepared laborious imitations of Seneca's narratives in dialogue.

In these imitations they ignored all the conditions of the contemporary theatre, — just as their master, the Hispano-Roman rhetorician, had chosen to ignore all the circumstances of the acted drama of his own time. These Italian imitations were as unactable as their originals; and for the most part they remained unacted and therefore without direct influence upon the actual drama of their own day. Sterility has always been the certain result of an unwillingness to accept the conditions of the contemporary theatre.

Probably it was owing to the example of the Italians that certain French and certain English poets prepared Senecan imitations in their own tongues. One or another of these dramatic poems in French and in English may have been acted by main strength, here or there, performed as an austere pleasure by valorous amateurs before sparse audiences of dilettantes. Their authors had taken no account of the existing traditions of the contemporary playhouse and cared nothing for the established expectations of the play-going public; and therefore, such performance as these poems may have had was sporadic only; it was never in a real theatre before a real audience that had paid its way in and wanted its money's worth. And yet, undramatic as were these imitations of Seneca, the "Cornélie" of Garnier in French and the "Gorboduc" of Norton and Sackville in English, it seems evident that in time they did have an indirect influence upon the actual theatre both of France and of England.

In both countries the professional playwrights, who

had inherited all the traditions of the medieval theatre and who knew all the accepted methods of pleasing the play-goers of their own time and of setting on the stage characters that would reward the acting of the professional players for whom the plays were prepared and by whom they were paid for, — these playwrights were eager in the search for new methods and for new material for their plots. They cared little or nothing for Seneca or for the great Greeks from whom he had borrowed ; but they saw in the modern imitations sundry effects and devices which they could appropriate and which would stiffen the dramatic action of their own plays written in the manner of the time. The professional playwrights, Hardy in France and Kyd in England, perceived how they might enrich the kind of play they were in the habit of writing with a plot more strenuously grasped and with a struggle more sharply defined. Taking a hint or two from these undramatic modern imitations of the undramatic Latin poet, the professional playwrights condensed the leisurely movement of the chronicle-play, and inflated its rhetoric.

In so doing they builded better than they knew. All unconsciously, and striving only to find new ways of pleasing their contemporaries, they did give the popular drama an upward tendency which was in time to make possible the masterpieces of Corneille in France and of Shakespeare in England. Modern tragedy, both French and English, is a direct outgrowth of the chronicle-play, which in its turn had sprung out of the medieval mystery; but it is a growth due to the cross-fertilisation

of the popular and unliterary drama by Greek tragedy, transmitted inaccurately and indirectly through the imitators of Seneca.

Before we see signs of the influence of Seneca, the popular drama of France and of England is loose-jointed and long-winded; it is fragmentary and diffuse; it is uncertain in aim and in execution. But after the playwrights had profited by the inspiring example of the Greeks as they found it preserved in the Latin rhetorician, the popular drama, whatever its deficiencies or its faults, was at least on the right path; it was no longer groping in darkness.

In England the popular playwrights got from the Roman poet not only a glimpse of the unity and the simplicity of Greek tragedy, they took over also certain of his own personal peculiarities, far less valuable than the Grecian swiftness and directness. They borrowed from the Spanish-Latin stylist his high-flown rhetoric and his loud-sounding apothegms. From him also they came by their relish for frigid horrors, which happened to be in accord with the taste of a large part of the Elizabethan public. Indeed, it is an open question whether the play-goers of any period have ever been free from a bold delight in the contemplation of horrors. Decharme, in his book on Euripides, dwelt on the fact that the taste of the Greeks was not always so pure as we are prone to suppose and that scenes of horror were not infrequent in the Athenian theatre; and Petit de Julleville, in his study of the medieval mysteries, pointed out that the spectators who flocked to see the miracle-

plays evidently enjoyed the episodes of painful martyrdom and of realistic torture. Nor need we moderns plume ourselves on our superior delicacy when we recall the wide acceptance of "La Tosca" and of "Francesca da Rimini," in which M. Sardou and Signor d'Annunzio have sought to amuse us with the spectacle of physical anguish.

The more cultivated audiences of our own time are rarely called upon to behold abominable atrocities, partly because it has been possible in our modern cities for the plentiful theatres to differentiate themselves more or less, one restricting itself to the more delicate aspects of comedy while another is devoted to the coarser efforts of melodrama. In England under Elizabeth no such differentiation had been essayed; and all the theatres were alike seeking to attract not so much the more refined courtiers as the sturdy citizens and robust wayfarers who lacked not only culture but even the faintest tincture of letters. The best of these Elizabethan playgoers were brave boys, frank and lusty, readier to give a blow than to bear one, and never shrinking from the sight of bloodshed; and the worst of them were lewd fellows of the baser sort, never squeamish in word or deed.

Their relish for rank brutality for its own sake was heightened by the cock-fighting and the bull-baiting which they were accustomed to see in the very theatre itself on the afternoons when the "Spanish Tragedy" or "Titus Andronicus" was not performed. In their inability to read, for the most part, in the absence of the

sensational novel and of the sensational newspaper, these full-blooded and coarse-grained Elizabethans looked to the stage to supply them with the violent delights which men of the same class under our modern conditions can get more easily elsewhere. The tragedy-of-blood is obviously enough a predecessor of the most thrilling of latter-day melodramas; but we shall fail to understand its vogue and its persistence unless we recognise in it also the sixteenth-century attempt to satisfy a debased taste for lust and gore which in the twentieth century can sate itself with the "penny dreadful" and the "yellow journal."

The applause that the "Spanish Tragedy" received echoes and re-echoes throughout the dramatic literature of half a century. Second only to Kyd's play in public favour were "Hamlet" and "Titus Andronicus," both of them successful on the stage long before Shakespeare reached out his royal hand and took them for his own. "Hamlet" (of which the original possibly had Kyd for its author) Shakespeare made over, raising it far above the level at which the tragedy-of-blood was content to exist. It was in his splendid maturity and in the plenitude of his powers that Shakespeare, seizing the very effective plot put together by his predecessor, informed it with his philosophy and gave us the "Hamlet," which is the loftiest and the deepest tragedy in any modern language. It was in his careless youth that he had to do with "Titus Andronicus"; and its grewsome theme did not tempt him to put forth his full strength. No doubt he bettered its workmanship

more or less, but he did not lift it out of its class. He left it where he found it; and it remains a mere tragedy-of-blood, abounding in needless abominations.

So little likeness has "Titus Andronicus" to his nobler plays that many lovers of Shakespeare would prefer to deny that it is in any way his; and some of them have rashly ventured to assert that he had nothing to do with it. There is no question that scarcely any one would have been foolhardy enough to ascribe it to him if it had not been credited to him while he was alive and included in his works after his death. The story is both absurd and repulsive; and it is told with childish illogic and with a dull reliance upon the accumulation of sickening atrocities. As a whole, the play is without Shakespeare's creative force, his constructive skill, his grasp of character, his penetration into motive, his exquisite pathos, his illuminative humour. It is with fear and trembling that we risk the attempt to discover, here and there, in a chance speech or two, some vague evidence that the play at least passed through Shakespeare's hands.

Shakespeare seems to have been not so much the author of "Titus Andronicus" as its editor, — its theatrical editor, revising it for use again on the stage. It was a habit of the theatre in those days to keep on improving a play that had pleased, by the elaboration of taking speeches and by the insertion of new episodes; and additions of this sort were supplied to the "Spanish Tragedy" itself, very likely by no less a hand than Ben Jonson's. It was the custom also to pass over a play that seemed to be getting a little old-fashioned to a

younger author that he might freshen it up. Shakespeare was reworking old stuff, worn out in stage service, when he wrote the "Taming of the Shrew" and "Hamlet," "Henry IV" and "Henry V." But in these cases, no matter where his material may have come from, Shakespeare assimilated it thoroughly and made it his own. He minted the coin anew and marked it with his own image and superscription.

When he revised "Titus Andronicus" he was younger and less expert in dramaturgic craftsmanship. Possibly he had less confidence in himself; and probably his employers did not give him so free a hand. It is absurd to assume that any manager ought already to have foreseen the surpassing dexterity of stage-craft which Shakespeare was soon to display. The work on "Titus Andronicus" was done before a succession of masterpieces had given him a position in the playhouse where he could have his own way; and it may well be that certain of the episodes and incidents most disgusting to us and seemingly least in accord with what we now suppose to be Shakespeare's own taste, were retained in his play at the behest of those who were paying him for his labour. In some cases, in "Henry V," for example, we have the play on which Shakespeare worked; and we can see for ourselves how marvellously he transfigured the shabby fabric he had to remake. Unfortunately the original of "Titus Andronicus" has not been preserved for us; and we are left to barren conjecture.

At least, this was the state of the case at the end of

the nineteenth century. Then, at last, the painstaking and the ingenuity of Mr. Harold DeW. Fuller and of Professor George P. Baker of Harvard University have suddenly shed a flood of light on the problem. From their researches it appears to be highly probable that there were two plays in existence before Shakespeare's, and that his play is the result of a *contaminatio* or combining of the two. In Henslowe's diary there are entries of "tittus and Vespasia" and of "titus and Ondronicus," hitherto often assumed to be two titles for one and the same drama. The first of these was probably an early play, acted by the Leicester or Worcester companies, and in time taken over to Germany by one of the bands of strolling English actors; apparently this piece survives in a German version. The second was probably a play acted by the Pembroke company, and by some English actors in time taken over to Holland; this piece again is apparently the source of an extant Dutch play by one Jan Vos. The English originals of the German play and of the Dutch play had belonged to different companies; but in June, 1594, both of them were owned by the company known as the Lord Chamberlain's men. Of this company Shakespeare was a member; and for this company he wrote plays.

The "Titus Andronicus" of Shakespeare, therefore, in which we find traces of both of the earlier pieces, now lost to us in English (although surviving, the one in German and the other in Dutch), was prepared most likely in the final months of 1594 — not long after he had published "Venus and Adonis." The poem was a

labour of love undertaken solely to please himself; the play only was a piece of task-work done under orders from his fellow-actors. "Titus Andronicus" was first published in quarto six years later, in 1600, without Shakespeare's name, although Meres two years earlier had credited him with its authorship; and it was included after his death in the first folio edition of his plays, edited in 1623 by his comrades, Heminge and Condell. There is really no reason to doubt Shakespeare's authorship of the drama as it appeared in the quarto of 1600. In its hideous grossness and in its sickening abominations, it is not more offensive than are other examples of the tragedy-of-blood, — even if it is wholly unlike what we discover in Shakespeare's other dramas. Stuff of this sort did not again tempt him; and there is no other play properly to be ascribed to him in which he put so little of himself. He never again took an old piece to make over and failed to purify it and to enrich it.

In "Titus Andronicus" Shakespeare may have been working against the grain; he may have been uninspired by the repugnant and repulsive story; he may not have been at liberty to deal as he liked with the matter placed in his hands for improvement. But we have ample evidence that Shakespeare had ever an eye to the main chance. He was always ready to turn his hand to anything likely to be profitable professionally, and he was ambitious to please the important members of the company which was to produce the riper plays of his later years. It was probably without protest that he did the work he was called upon to undertake. Shakespeare

may have read Seneca at school; and he must often have acted himself in more than one tragedy-of-blood quite as obnoxious as is "Titus Andronicus." Well is it for us to remember that much which is offensive to us in the beginning of the twentieth century was not offensive to our forebears at the end of the sixteenth century.

After all, it must ever be borne in mind that Shakespeare was an Elizabethan in his feelings, as well as in his frank utilisation of the conditions of the primitive playhouse modelled on the courtyard of an inn, open to the sky, without curtain or scenery. As we read the play in the earliest edition, the quarto of 1600 with its quaint stage-directions, we perceive Shakespeare's unquestioning acceptance of all the traditional devices of the Elizabethan theatre, — the bare stage, to be left empty at the end, because there was no curtain to screen the actors, — the gallery over the stage, in which various characters appear to hold colloquy with their fellows below, — the arras pendant from the edge of this gallery, now parting on the extreme right or extreme left to admit the rival pretenders to the throne, and now draped back in the centre to disclose some semblance of a tomb wherein the sons of Titus were laid at rest.

In the whole play there is no division into scenes or even into acts; nor is there any indication of the lapse of time, save as the story itself rolled along in its puerile tumultuousness. There is, of course, no suggestion of any change of scenery, because scenery had never existed in any theatre with which Shakespeare was familiar.

The scene of the play is laid on the stage, — frankly on the stage itself, — with no vain attempt to particularise the special places where the action is evidently passing. And if Shakespeare was ready to work in accordance with all the external conditions of the Elizabethan theatre, rude as they were and to us absurdly inartistic, there is no reason to suppose that he would shrink from exhibiting the varied horrors which Elizabethan spectators expected to have set before them when they went to see a tragedy-of-blood.

Even though Shakespeare is responsible for the revision of the play, even though he is to be accounted its editor, if not its actual author, there are few lines in the dialogue that have the true Shakespearian ring and few scenes that unroll with the true Shakespearian movement. "Titus Andronicus" is not at all Shakespearian either in structure or in style. But our ideal of what is truly Shakespearian is the result of our study of his best plays; and Shakespeare was not always at his best. Indeed, he is more unequal than Sophocles or Molière. When he girded himself and put forth all his strength, as in "Othello" and "Macbeth" and "Hamlet," he stands before us as the greatest dramatist of all time. But he did not often choose to exert himself, knowing that so sublime an effort was not needed in the Elizabethan playhouse. So it is that not a few of the devices he uses, pleasing enough to the uncritical audiences of his own day, seem to us almost childish and pitifully inexpensive. So it is that not a few of his plays, when taken apart by a student of dramaturgic technic, are discovered

to be carelessly put together, with little regard to plausibility or to symmetry.

It is only by resolutely refusing to look at the facts paraded before our eyes that we can assume Shakespeare to have been always an impeccable artist, moving steadily and inevitably toward perfection and always availing himself of his marvellous psychologic insight and of his profound philosophic understanding. It is simpler to say that Shakespeare sometimes nodded, as Homer had done before him; and to admit honestly that the last act of "Hamlet" is needlessly sanguinary, that the last act of "Cymbeline" has a wasteful cluttering of ineffective situations, and that the plot of "A Winter's Tale" is painfully broken-backed. Then we shall find it easier to admit also that, although "Titus Andronicus" is plainly unworthy of him, it has an interest of its own, in that it shows us an inexpert Shakespeare working over old material without liberty of rejection.

BRANDER MATTHEWS.

# TITUS ANDRONICUS

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ[1]

SATURNINUS, son to the late Emperor of Rome, afterwards emperor.
BASSIANUS, brother to Saturninus.
TITUS ANDRONICUS, a noble Roman.
MARCUS ANDRONICUS, tribune of the people, and brother to Titus.
LUCIUS,
QUINTUS,
MARTIUS,
MUTIUS,
} sons to Titus Andronicus.
YOUNG LUCIUS, a boy, son to Lucius.
PUBLIUS, son to Marcus Andronicus.
ÆMILIUS, a noble Roman.
ALARBUS,
DEMETRIUS,
CHIRON,
} sons to Tamora.
AARON, a Moor, beloved by Tamora.
A Captain, Tribune, Messenger, and Clown ; Romans and Goths.

TAMORA, Queen of the Goths.
LAVINIA, daughter to Titus Andronicus.
A Nurse, and a black Child.

Kinsmen of Titus, Senators, Tribunes, Officers, Soldiers, and Attendants.

SCENE : *Rome, and the country near it*

[1] This piece was first published in 1594 in a Quarto volume which was reissued with slight change in 1600 and 1611. All copies of the 1594 Quarto have disappeared since the 17th century, save one which came to light in 1904. For its collation see *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft*, 1905, pp. 211–215. The First Folio text appears to follow the Second Quarto with small variation. The Quartos have no subdivisions into Acts or Scenes; the Folios indicate the Acts only. The list of "dramatis personæ" was first supplied by Rowe in 1709.

## ACT FIRST — SCENE I — ROME

*BEFORE THE CAPITOL — THE TOMB OF THE ANDRONICI APPEARING*

*Flourish. Enter the* Tribunes *and* Senators *aloft. And then enter below,* SATURNINUS *and his* Followers *from one side, and* BASSIANUS *and his* Followers *from the other side, with drum and colours*

SATURNINUS

NOBLE PATRICIANS, PATRONS of my right,
Defend the justice of my cause with arms;
And, countrymen, my loving followers,
Plead my successive title with your swords:
I am his first-born son, that was the last
That ware the imperial diadem of Rome;
Then let my father's honours live in me,
Nor wrong mine age with this indignity.

BAS. Romans, friends, followers, favourers of my right,

If ever Bassianus, Cæsar's son,
Were gracious in the eyes of royal Rome,
Keep then this passage to the Capitol;
And suffer not dishonour to approach
The imperial seat, to virtue consecrate,
To justice, continence and nobility:
But let desert in pure election shine;
And, Romans, fight for freedom in your choice.

*Enter* MARCUS ANDRONICUS, *aloft, with the crown*

MARC. Princes, that strive by factions and by friends
Ambitiously for rule and empery,
Know that the people of Rome, for whom we stand
A special party, have by common voice,
In election for the Roman empery,
Chosen Andronicus, surnamed Pius
For many good and great deserts to Rome:
A nobler man, a braver warrior,
Lives not this day within the city walls:

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(stage direction) *Enter the Tribunes . . . aloft*] Thus the Folios. By "aloft" is meant the upper gallery or balcony at the back of the stage of the Elizabethan theatre. The balcony here represents the Capitol. (Cf. stage directions following lines 17, *infra;* V, ii, 8, 69 and 80, and V, iii, 66 and 145.)

4 *my successive title*] my hereditary right to succeed.

6 *ware*] Thus the Quartos. The Folios give the modern form *wore.*

8 *mine age*] my seniority in point of age.

15 *continence*] self-restraint.

16 *in pure election*] in the purity of free election (instead of in right of birth).

19 *empery*] empire, a common form.

21 *by common voice*] unanimously.

He by the senate is accited home
From weary wars against the barbarous Goths;
That, with his sons, a terror to our foes,
Hath yoked a nation strong, train'd up in arms.
Ten years are spent since first he undertook
This cause of Rome, and chastised with arms
Our enemies' pride: five times he hath return'd
Bleeding to Rome, bearing his valiant sons
In coffins from the field.
And now at last, laden with honour's spoils,
Returns the good Andronicus to Rome,
Renowned Titus, flourishing in arms.
Let us entreat, by honour of his name,
Whom worthily you would have now succeed,
And in the Capitol and senate's right,
Whom you pretend to honour and adore,
That you withdraw you and abate your strength,
Dismiss your followers and, as suitors should,
Plead your deserts in peace and humbleness.

27 *accited*] summoned; only found elsewhere in Shakespeare in *2 Hen. IV*, II, ii, 56, and V, ii, 141.

29 *That*] He who.

35 *In coffins from the field*] Thus the Second Quarto and all later editions. The First Quarto (1594) fills up the line with the words *and at this day*, and then inserts these three lines which are omitted from all later editions:

*To the Monument of that Andronicy*
*Done sacrifice of expiation,*
*And slaine the noblest prisoner of the Gothes.*

41 *in the Capitol . . . right*] in the name of the Capitol and the senate's authority.

43 *abate your strength*] reduce your numbers

SAT. How fair the tribune speaks to calm my thoughts!
BAS. Marcus Andronicus, so I do affy
In thy uprightness and integrity,
And so I love and honour thee and thine,
Thy noble brother Titus and his sons,
And her to whom my thoughts are humbled all,
Gracious Lavinia, Rome's rich ornament,
That I will here dismiss my loving friends,
And to my fortunes and the people's favour
Commit my cause in balance to be weigh'd.

[*Exeunt the Followers of Bassianus.*

SAT. Friends, that have been thus forward in my right,
I thank you all, and here dismiss you all,
And to the love and favour of my country
Commit myself, my person and the cause.

[*Exeunt the Followers of Saturninus.*

Rome, be as just and gracious unto me,
As I am confident and kind to thee.
Open the gates, and let me in.
BAS. Tribunes, and me, a poor competitor.

[*Flourish. Saturninus and Bassianus go up into the Capitol.*

*Enter a* Captain

CAP. Romans, make way: the good Andronicus,
Patron of virtue, Rome's best champion,

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47 *affy*] trust.

64 CAP. *Romans, make way*] Pope makes a new scene begin here. But this division, which is followed by many editors, is not justified by the early editions.

Successful in the battles that he fights,
With honour and with fortune is return'd
From where he circumscribed with his sword,
And brought to yoke, the enemies of Rome.

*Drums and trumpets sounded. Enter* MARTIUS *and* MUTIUS; *after them, two* Men *bearing a coffin covered with black; then* LUCIUS *and* QUINTUS. *After them,* TITUS ANDRONICUS; *and then* TAMORA Queen of Goths, *with* ALARBUS, DEMETRIUS, CHIRON, AARON, *and other* Goths, *prisoners;* Soldiers *and* People *following. The* Bearers *set down the coffin, and* TITUS *speaks*

TIT. Hail, Rome, victorious in thy mourning weeds!
Lo, as the bark that hath discharged her fraught
Returns with precious lading to the bay
From whence at first she weigh'd her anchorage,
Cometh Andronicus, bound with laurel boughs,
To re-salute his country with his tears,
Tears of true joy for his return to Rome.
Thou great defender of this Capitol,
Stand gracious to the rites that we intend!
Romans, of five and twenty valiant sons,
Half of the number that King Priam had,
Behold the poor remains, alive and dead!
These that survive let Rome reward with love;
These that I bring unto their latest home,
With burial amongst their ancestors:
Here Goths have given me leave to sheathe my sword.
Titus, unkind, and careless of thine own,

77 *Thou great defender of this Capitol*] Jupiter, to whom the Capitol was consecrated.

Why suffer'st thou thy sons, unburied yet,
To hover on the dreadful shore of Styx?
Make way to lay them by their brethren.
[*They open the tomb.*
There greet in silence, as the dead are wont,
And sleep in peace, slain in your country's wars!
O sacred receptacle of my joys,
Sweet cell of virtue and nobility,
How many sons hast thou of mine in store,
That thou wilt never render to me more!

LUC. Give us the proudest prisoner of the Goths,
That we may hew his limbs and on a pile
"Ad manes fratrum" sacrifice his flesh,
Before this earthy prison of their bones,
That so the shadows be not unappeased,
Nor we disturb'd with prodigies on earth.

TIT. I give him you, the noblest that survives,
The eldest son of this distressed queen.

TAM. Stay, Roman brethren! Gracious conqueror,
Victorious Titus, rue the tears I shed,
A mother's tears in passion for her son:

87–88 *Why suffer'st . . . of Styx*] a reminiscence of Virgil's *Æneid*, VI, 325–329: "Haec omnis, quam cernis, inops *inhumataque turba est:* . . . Centum errant annos *volitantque haec litora circum.*"

92 *receptacle*] accented on the first and third syllables, as in II, iii, 235, *infra*, and *Rom. and Jul.*, IV, iii, 39.

99 *earthy*] Thus the Quartos. The Folios read *earthly.*

100 *the shadows*] the shades, "manes," spirits of the dead.

101 *Nor we . . . on earth*] It was the common belief that the spirits of unburied bodies haunted the living in hideous forms.

105 *rue*] pity.

106 *in passion*] in grief, in anguish.

And if thy sons were ever dear to thee,
O, think my son to be as dear to me!
Sufficeth not, that we are brought to Rome,
To beautify thy triumphs and return,
Captive to thee and to thy Roman yoke;
But must my sons be slaughter'd in the streets,
For valiant doings in their country's cause?
O, if to fight for king and commonweal
Were piety in thine, it is in these.
Andronicus, stain not thy tomb with blood.
Wilt thou draw near the nature of the gods?
Draw near them then in being merciful:
Sweet mercy is nobility's true badge:
Thrice-noble Titus, spare my first-born son.

TIT. Patient yourself, madam, and pardon me.
These are their brethren, whom you Goths beheld
Alive and dead; and for their brethren slain
Religiously they ask a sacrifice:
To this your son is mark'd, and die he must,
To appease their groaning shadows that are gone.

LUC. Away with him! and make a fire straight;
And with our swords, upon a pile of wood,
Let 's hew his limbs till they be clean consumed.

[*Exeunt the sons of Andronicus with Alarbus.*

TAM. O cruel, irreligious piety!

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119 *Sweet mercy . . . true badge*] a slender anticipation of Portia's great appeal, *Merch. of Ven.*, IV, i, 179–200.

121 *Patient yourself*] calm yourself, be patient. For a like use of "patient," cf. *Arden of Feversham*, V, i, 80: "*Patient* yourself, we cannot help it now."

125 *mark'd*] destined.

CHI. Was ever Scythia half so barbarous?
DEM. Oppose not Scythia to ambitious Rome.
Alarbus goes to rest, and we survive
To tremble under Titus' threatening look.
Then, madam, stand resolved; but hope withal,
The self-same gods that arm'd the Queen of Troy
With opportunity of sharp revenge
Upon the Thracian tyrant in his tent,
May favour Tamora, the queen of Goths,
When Goths were Goths and Tamora was queen,
To quit the bloody wrongs upon her foes.

*Re-enter the sons of* ANDRONICUS, *with their swords bloody*

LUC. See, lord and father, how we have perform'd
Our Roman rites: Alarbus' limbs are lopp'd,
And entrails feed the sacrificing fire,
Whose smoke, like incense, doth perfume the sky.
Remaineth nought but to inter our brethren,
And with loud 'larums welcome them to Rome.

131 *Was ever Scythia . . . barbarous*] The Scythians are instanced as the extreme type of barbarism in *Lear*, I, i, 115: "The *barbarous Scythian*."

132 *Oppose not . . . Rome*] Do not contrast Scythia with ambitious Rome, which is much more cruel.

136–138 *The self-same gods . . . tent*] a reminiscence of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, xiii, 439–575, who tells how Hecuba, Queen of Troy, inveigled into "a secret place" and killed "the Thracian king" Polymnestor, who had previously slain her son Polydorus. Cf. IV, i, 20, *infra*. Ovid drew the story from Euripides' play of *Hecuba*, where Hecuba's tent is the scene of Polymnestor's murder. Theobald substituted *her tent* for *his tent* in line 138, in conformity with the Greek story. But *his tent* might easily be suggested by Ovid's version of the tale.

141 *quit*] requite, avenge.

TIT. Let it be so; and let Andronicus
Make this his latest farewell to their souls.

[*Trumpets sounded, and the coffin laid in the tomb.*

In peace and honour rest you here, my sons;
Rome's readiest champions, repose you here in rest,
Secure from worldly chances and mishaps!
Here lurks no treason, here no envy swells,
Here grow no damned drugs; here are no storms,
No noise, but silence and eternal sleep:
In peace and honour rest you here, my sons!

*Enter* LAVINIA

LAV. In peace and honour live Lord Titus long;
My noble lord and father, live in fame!
Lo, at this tomb my tributary tears
I render, for my brethren's obsequies;
And at thy feet I kneel, with tears of joy
Shed on the earth, for thy return to Rome:
O, bless me here with thy victorious hand,
Whose fortunes Rome's best citizens applaud!

TIT. Kind Rome, that hast thus lovingly reserved
The cordial of mine age to glad my heart!
Lavinia, live; outlive thy father's days,
And fame's eternal date, for virtue's praise!

---

154 *drugs*] Thus the First and Second Quartos. The later editions read *grudges*.

159 *tributary tears*] The phrase is repeated, III, i, 270, *infra*.

167–168 *outlive . . . praise*] a poetical exaggeration; a wish that, in order to preserve eternally the example of virtue, Lavinia may live for ever.

*Enter, below,* MARCUS ANDRONICUS *and* Tribunes; *re-enter* SATURNINUS *and* BASSIANUS, *attended*

MARC. Long live Lord Titus, my beloved brother,
Gracious triumpher in the eyes of Rome!
TIT. Thanks, gentle tribune, noble brother Marcus.
MARC. And welcome, nephews, from successful wars,
You that survive, and you that sleep in fame!
Fair lords, your fortunes are alike in all,
That in your country's service drew your swords:
But safer triumph is this funeral pomp,
That hath aspired to Solon's happiness,
And triumphs over chance in honour's bed.
Titus Andronicus, the people of Rome,
Whose friend in justice thou hast ever been,
Send thee by me, their tribune and their trust,
This palliament of white and spotless hue;
And name thee in election for the empire,
With these our late-deceased emperor's sons:
Be candidatus then, and put it on,
And help to set a head on headless Rome.
TIT. A better head her glorious body fits

177 *That hath . . . Solon's happiness*] An allusion to Solon's well-known saying "Call no man happy till he is dead." The warriors who die in honourable warfare alone realise final happiness.

181 *trust*] trustee, the man in whom they put their trust.

182 *palliament*] a rare coinage from the medieval Latin "palliamentum," a robe or cloak. Cf. Peele's *Honour of the Garter*, line 92, "a Roman *palliament*."

187–188 *A better head . . . feebleness*] Titus gives himself a character which is quite out of harmony with his conduct throughout the play.

Than his that shakes for age and feebleness:
What should I don this robe, and trouble you?
Be chosen with proclamations to-day,
To-morrow yield up rule, resign my life,
And set abroad new business for you all?
Rome, I have been thy soldier forty years,
And led my country's strength successfully,
And buried one and twenty valiant sons,
Knighted in field, slain manfully in arms,
In right and service of their noble country:
Give me a staff of honour for mine age,
But not a sceptre to control the world:
Upright he held it, lords, that held it last.

MARC. Titus, thou shalt obtain and ask the empery.

SAT. Proud and ambitious tribune, canst thou tell?

TIT. Patience, Prince Saturninus.

SAT. Romans, do me right;
Patricians, draw your swords, and sheathe them not
Till Saturninus be Rome's emperor.
Andronicus, would thou wert shipp'd to hell,
Rather than rob me of the people's hearts!

LUC. Proud Saturnine, interrupter of the good
That noble-minded Titus means to thee!

TIT. Content thee, prince; I will restore to thee
The people's hearts, and wean them from themselves.

BAS. Andronicus, I do not flatter thee,

---

189 *What . . . ?*] Why? like the Latin "quid?"

192 *And set abroad . . . all*] And put you all again to the trouble of making a new election; augment your public responsibilities.

201 *obtain and ask*] obtain by asking.

But honour thee, and will do till I die:
My faction if thou strengthen with thy friends,
I will most thankful be; and thanks to men
Of noble minds is honourable meed.

TIT. People of Rome, and people's tribunes here,
I ask your voices and your suffrages:
Will you bestow them friendly on Andronicus?

TRIBUNES. To gratify the good Andronicus,
And gratulate his safe return to Rome,
The people will accept whom he admits.

TIT. Tribunes, I thank you: and this suit I make,
That you create your emperor's eldest son,
Lord Saturnine; whose virtues will, I hope,
Reflect on Rome as Titan's rays on earth,
And ripen justice in this commonweal:
Then, if you will elect by my advice,
Crown him, and say "Long live our emperor!"

MARC. With voices and applause of every sort,
Patricians and plebeians, we create
Lord Saturninus Rome's great emperor,
And say "Long live our Emperor Saturnine!"

*[A long flourish till they come down.*

SAT. Titus Andronicus, for thy favours done
To us in our election this day,
I give thee thanks in part of thy deserts,
And will with deeds requite thy gentleness:
And, for an onset, Titus, to advance

---

221 *gratulate*] show satisfaction at, congratulate him upon.
237 *thy gentleness*] thy civility.
238 *onset*] beginning.

Thy name and honourable family,
Lavinia will I make my empress,
Rome's royal mistress, mistress of my heart,
And in the sacred Pantheon her espouse:
Tell me, Andronicus, doth this motion please thee?
TIT. It doth, my worthy lord; and in this match
I hold me highly honour'd of your grace:
And here, in sight of Rome, to Saturnine,
King and commander of our commonweal,
The wide world's emperor, do I consecrate
My sword, my chariot and my prisoners;
Presents well worthy Rome's imperious lord:
Receive them then, the tribute that I owe,
Mine honour's ensigns humbled at thy feet.
SAT. Thanks, noble Titus, father of my life!
How proud I am of thee and of thy gifts,
Rome shall record; and when I do forget
The least of these unspeakable deserts,
Romans, forget your fealty to me.
TIT. [*To Tamora*] Now, madam, are you prisoner to an emperor;
To him that, for your honour and your state,
Will use you nobly and your followers.
SAT. A goodly lady, trust me; of the hue
That I would choose, were I to choose anew.
Clear up, fair queen, that cloudy countenance:

---

242 *Pantheon*] the temple built in the Campus Martius at Rome by Agrippa, A. D. 27.
243 *motion*] proposal, proposition.

Though chance of war hath wrought this change of cheer,
Thou comest not to be made a scorn in Rome:
Princely shall be thy usage every way.
Rest on my word, and let not discontent
Daunt all your hopes: madam, he comforts you
Can make you greater than the Queen of Goths.
Lavinia, you are not displeased with this?
LAV. Not I, my lord; sith true nobility
Warrants these words in princely courtesy.
SAT. Thanks, sweet Lavinia. Romans, let us go:
Ransomless here we set our prisoners free:
Proclaim our honours, lords, with trump and drum.
[*Flourish. Saturninus courts Tamora in dumb show.*
BAS. [*Seizing Lavinia*] Lord Titus, by your leave, this maid is mine.
TIT. How, sir! are you in earnest then, my lord?
BAS. Ay, noble Titus, and resolved withal
To do myself this reason and this right.
MARC. "Suum cuique" is our Roman justice:
This prince in justice seizeth but his own.
LUC. And that he will, and shall, if Lucius live.
TIT. Traitors, avaunt! Where is the emperor's guard?
Treason, my lord! Lavinia is surprised!
SAT. Surprised! by whom?
BAS. By him that justly may
Bear his betroth'd from all the world away.
[*Exeunt Bassianus and Marcus with Lavinia.*

264 *change of cheer*] change of condition (from happiness to sorrow).

MUT. Brothers, help to convey her hence away,
And with my sword I'll keep this door safe.
[*Exeunt Lucius, Quintus, and Martius.*
TIT. Follow, my lord, and I'll soon bring her back.
MUT. My lord, you pass not here.
TIT. What, villain boy!
Barr'st me my way in Rome? [*Stabbing Mutius.*
MUT. Help, Lucius, help! [*Dies.*
[*During the fray, Saturninus, Tamora, Demetrius, Chiron and Aaron go out, and re-enter above.*

*Re-enter* LUCIUS

LUC. My lord, you are unjust; and, more than so,
In wrongful quarrel you have slain your son.
TIT. Nor thou, nor he, are any sons of mine;
My sons would never so dishonour me:
Traitor, restore Lavinia to the emperor.
LUC. Dead, if you will; but not to be his wife,
That is another's lawful promised love. [*Exit.*
SAT. No, Titus, no; the emperor needs her not,
Nor her, nor thee, nor any of thy stock:
I'll trust by leisure him that mocks me once;
Thee never, nor thy traitorous haughty sons,
Confederates all thus to dishonour me.
Was none in Rome to make a stale
But Saturnine? Full well, Andronicus,
Agree these deeds with that proud brag of thine,
That saidst, I begg'd the empire at thy hands.

298 *That*] She (*i. e.*, Lavinia).
301 *I'll trust by leisure*] I'll trust when I have the leisure (an unlikely condition). The speaker ironically means that he is not likely to trust.
304 *stale*] laughing-stock, object of ridicule.

TIT. O monstrous! what reproachful words are these?

SAT. But go thy ways; go give that changing piece
To him that flourish'd for her with his sword:
A valiant son-in-law thou shalt enjoy;
One fit to bandy with thy lawless sons,
To ruffle in the commonwealth of Rome.

TIT. These words are razors to my wounded heart.

SAT. And therefore, lovely Tamora, Queen of Goths,
That, like the stately Phœbe 'mongst her nymphs,
Dost overshine the gallant'st dames of Rome,
If thou be pleased with this my sudden choice,
Behold, I choose thee, Tamora, for my bride,
And will create thee empress of Rome.
Speak, Queen of Goths, dost thou applaud my choice?
And here I swear by all the Roman gods,
Sith priest and holy water are so near,
And tapers burn so bright, and every thing
In readiness for Hymenæus stand,

309 *that changing piece*] that fickle baggage. "Piece" is often applied to a woman contemptuously. Cf. the old play of *Leir*, "that pretty *piece*," and *Troil. and Cress.*, IV, i, 64: "a flat tamed *piece*." It is more rarely a term of compliment.

310 *flourish'd*] brandished insolently.

313 *ruffle*] swagger, behave boisterously.

316 *Phœbe*] the name applied by classical authors to Diana, chiefly in her character of goddess of the moon. "Cynthia" is a more common alternative. Ovid very occasionally calls Diana "Phœbe." Golding, in his translation of the *Metamorphoses*, uses the title far more often than the original warrants.

325 *Hymenæus*] the god of marriage, the classical form, found nowhere else in Shakespeare's plays, of the more familiar "Hymen."

I will not re-salute the streets of Rome,
Or climb my palace, till from forth this place
I lead espoused my bride along with me.
TAM. And here, in sight of heaven, to Rome I swear,
If Saturnine advance the Queen of Goths,
She will a handmaid be to his desires,
A loving nurse, a mother to his youth.
SAT. Ascend, fair queen, Pantheon. Lords, accompany
Your noble emperor and his lovely bride,
Sent by the heavens for Prince Saturnine,
Whose wisdom hath her fortune conquered:
There shall we consummate our spousal rites.
[*Exeunt all but Titus.*
TIT. I am not bid to wait upon this bride.
Titus, when wert thou wont to walk alone,
Dishonour'd thus and challenged of wrongs?

*Re-enter* MARCUS, LUCIUS, QUINTUS, *and* MARTIUS

MARC. O Titus, see, O, see what thou hast done!
In a bad quarrel slain a virtuous son.
TIT. No, foolish tribune, no; no son of mine,
Nor thou, nor these, confederates in the deed
That hath dishonour'd all our family;
Unworthy brother, and unworthy sons!
LUC. But let us give him burial, as becomes;
Give Mutius burial with our brethren.
TIT. Traitors, away! he rests not in this tomb:

333 *Pantheon*] See note on line 242, *supra.*
338 *I am not bid*] I am not invited.
340 *challenged*] accused.

This monument five hundred years hath stood,
Which I have sumptuously re-edified:
Here none but soldiers and Rome's servitors
Repose in fame; none basely slain in brawls:
Bury him where you can, he comes not here.
MARC. My lord, this is impiety in you:
My nephew Mutius' deeds do plead for him;
He must be buried with his brethren.
QUIN. } And shall, or him we will accompany.
MART. }
TIT. And shall! what villain was it spake that word?
QUIN. He that would vouch it in any place but here.
TIT. What, would you bury him in my despite?
MARC. No, noble Titus; but entreat of thee
To pardon Mutius and to bury him.
TIT. Marcus, even thou hast struck upon my crest,
And with these boys mine honour thou hast wounded:
My foes I do repute you every one;
So trouble me no more, but get you gone.
MART. He is not with himself; let us withdraw.
QUIN. Not I, till Mutius' bones be buried.
[*Marcus and the sons of Titus kneel.*
MARC. Brother, for in that name doth nature plead,—
QUIN. Father, and in that name doth nature speak,—
TIT. Speak thou no more, if all the rest will speed.
MARC. Renowned Titus, more than half my soul,—
LUC. Dear father, soul and substance of us all,—

368 *He is not with himself*] He is beside himself, a rare usage.
372 *Speak . . . will speed*] Thy intervention will be of no avail, though all the rest succeed in bending me.

MARC. Suffer thy brother Marcus to inter
His noble nephew here in virtue's nest,
That died in honour and Lavinia's cause.
Thou art a Roman; be not barbarous:
The Greeks upon advice did bury Ajax
That slew himself; and wise Laertes' son
Did graciously plead for his funerals:
Let not young Mutius then, that was thy joy,
Be barr'd his entrance here.
TIT. Rise, Marcus, rise:
The dismall'st day is this that e'er I saw,
To be dishonour'd by my sons in Rome!
Well, bury him, and bury me the next.
[*Mutius is put into the tomb.*
LUC. There lie thy bones, sweet Mutius, with thy friends,
Till we with trophies do adorn thy tomb.
ALL. [*Kneeling*] No man shed tears for noble Mutius;
He lives in fame that died in virtue's cause.

379–381 *The Greeks . . . his funerals*] "Wise Laertes' son" is Ulysses, who in Sophocles' play of *Ajax* successfully pleads with Agamemnon for giving Ajax's remains the rights of burial. Sophocles seems to be the only classical author who mentions Ulysses' intercession, a circumstance which is the foundation of the theory that the author of *Titus* was a student of Sophocles.

381 *funerals*] The plural form is common, as in "nuptials."

389–390 *No man . . . virtue's cause*] a well-known classical conceit. Cf. Ennius' distich,

Nemo me lacrumis decoret, nec funera fletu
Facsit; cur? volito vivu' per ora virum.

(Let none honour me with tears, or celebrate my obsequies with weeping; why? I flit alive on the lips of men.)

MARC. My lord, to step out of these dreary dumps,
How comes it that the subtle Queen of Goths
Is of a sudden thus advanced in Rome?
TIT. I know not, Marcus; but I know it is,
Whether by device or no, the heavens can tell:
Is she not then beholding to the man
That brought her for this high good turn so far?
Yes, and will nobly him remunerate.

*Flourish. Re-enter, from one side,* SATURNINUS *attended,* TAMORA, DEMETRIUS, CHIRON, *and* AARON; *from the other,* BASSIANUS, LAVINIA, *with others*

SAT. So, Bassianus, you have play'd your prize:
God give you joy, sir, of your gallant bride!
BAS. And you of yours, my lord! I say no more,
Nor wish no less; and so I take my leave.
SAT. Traitor, if Rome have law, or we have power,
Thou and thy faction shall repent this rape.
BAS. Rape, call you it, my lord, to seize my own,
My true-betrothed love, and now my wife?
But let the laws of Rome determine all;
Meanwhile I am possess'd of that is mine.
SAT. 'T is good, sir: you are very short with us;
But, if we live, we 'll be as sharp with you.
BAS. My lord, what I have done, as best I may,
Answer I must, and shall do with my life.

391 *these dreary dumps*] these doleful strains of melancholy.
395 *by device*] by stratagem.
399 *play'd your prize*] won your match; a term common in fencing encounters.

Only thus much I give your grace to know:
By all the duties that I owe to Rome,
This noble gentleman, Lord Titus here,
Is in opinion and in honour wrong'd;
That, in the rescue of Lavinia,
With his own hand did slay his youngest son,
In zeal to you and highly moved to wrath
To be controll'd in that he frankly gave:
Receive him then to favour, Saturnine,
That hath express'd himself in all his deeds
A father and a friend to thee and Rome.
TIT. Prince Bassianus, leave to plead my deeds:
'T is thou and those that have dishonour'd me.
Rome and the righteous heavens be my judge,
How I have loved and honour'd Saturnine!
TAM. My worthy lord, if ever Tamora
Were gracious in those princely eyes of thine,
Then hear me speak indifferently for all;
And at my suit, sweet, pardon what is past.
SAT. What, madam! be dishonour'd openly,
And basely put it up without revenge?
TAM. Not so, my lord; the gods of Rome forfend

413 *Only thus much . . . to know*] This is sufficient information for me to impart to you.
416 *opinion*] credit.
420 *To be controll'd . . . gave*] To be checked or interfered with when offering a free gift.
424 *leave to plead my deeds*] cease making my achievements the ground of your plea.
430 *indifferently*] impartially.
433 *put it up*] put up with it.

I should be author to dishonour you!
But on mine honour dare I undertake
For good Lord Titus' innocence in all;
Whose fury not dissembled speaks his griefs:
Then, at my suit, look graciously on him;
Lose not so noble a friend on vain suppose,
Nor with sour looks afflict his gentle heart.
[*Aside to Sat.*] My lord, be ruled by me, be won at last;
Dissemble all your griefs and discontents:
You are but newly planted in your throne;
Lest then the people, and patricians too,
Upon a just survey, take Titus' part,
And so supplant you for ingratitude,
Which Rome reputes to be a heinous sin,
Yield at entreats, and then let me alone:
I'll find a day to massacre them all,
And raze their faction and their family,
The cruel father and his traitorous sons,
To whom I sued for my dear son's life;
And make them know what 't is to let a queen
Kneel in the streets and beg for grace in vain. —
Come, come, sweet emperor; come, Andronicus;
Take up this good old man, and cheer the heart
That dies in tempest of thy angry frown.

SAT. Rise, Titus, rise; my empress hath prevail'd.

435 *I should be author . . . you*] I should do anything derogatory to you. "Author" is used like the Latin "auctor."

436 *undertake*] become surety, pledge my word.

440 *suppose*] surmise.

449 *Yield at entreats*] Yield to entreaties. Cf. line 483, *infra*.

457 *Take up*] Lift up, cause to rise.

TIT. I thank your majesty, and her, my lord:
These words, these looks, infuse new life in me.
TAM. Titus, I am incorporate in Rome,
A Roman now adopted happily,
And must advise the emperor for his good.
This day all quarrels die, Andronicus.
And let it be mine honour, good my lord,
That I have reconciled your friends and you.
For you, Prince Bassianus, I have pass'd
My word and promise to the emperor,
That you will be more mild and tractable.
And fear not, lords, and you, Lavinia;
By my advice, all humbled on your knees,
You shall ask pardon of his majesty.
LUC. We do; and vow to heaven, and to his highness,
That what we did was mildly as we might,
Tendering our sister's honour and our own.
MARC. That, on mine honour, here I do protest.
SAT. Away, and talk not; trouble us no more.
TAM. Nay, nay, sweet emperor, we must all be friends:
The tribune and his nephews kneel for grace;
I will not be denied: sweet heart, look back.
SAT. Marcus, for thy sake and thy brother's here,
And at my lovely Tamora's entreats,
I do remit these young men's heinous faults:
Stand up.
Lavinia, though you left me like a churl,

476 *Tendering*] Having tender regard for.
481 *look back*] reconsider.
483 *entreats*] entreaties. Cf. line 449, *supra*.

I found a friend; and sure as death I swore
I would not part a bachelor from the priest.
Come, if the emperor's court can feast two brides,
You are my guest, Lavinia, and your friends.
This day shall be a love-day, Tamora.

TIT. To-morrow, an it please your majesty
To hunt the panther and the hart with me,
With horn and hound we'll give your grace bonjour.

SAT. Be it so, Titus, and gramercy too.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

491 *a love-day*] a day of friendly settlement, of reconciliation.

495 *gramercy*] A French phrase for "grand merci" (*i. e.*, best thanks); "bonjour" has much the same significance in the previous line.

## ACT SECOND — SCENE I — ROME

*BEFORE THE PALACE*

*Enter* AARON

AARON

NOW CLIMBETH TAMORA Olympus' top,
Safe out of fortune's shot, and sits aloft,
Secure of thunder's crack or lightning flash,
Advanced above pale envy's threatening reach.
As when the golden sun salutes the morn,
And, having gilt the ocean with his beams,
Gallops the zodiac in his glistering coach,
And overlooks the highest-peering hills;
So Tamora:

---

3 *Secure*] Careless or fearless.

6 *having gilt . . . beams*] This effect of sunlight is similarly described in *Mids. N. Dr.*, III, ii, 393, and *Sonnet* xxxiii, 4.

Upon her wit doth earthly honour wait,
And virtue stoops and trembles at her frown.
Then, Aaron, arm thy heart, and fit thy thoughts,
To mount aloft with thy imperial mistress,
And mount her pitch, whom thou in triumph long
Hast prisoner held, fetter'd in amorous chains,
And faster bound to Aaron's charming eyes
Than is Prometheus tied to Caucasus.
Away with slavish weeds and servile thoughts!
I will be bright, and shine in pearl and gold,
To wait upon this new-made empress.
To wait, said I? to wanton with this queen,
This goddess, this Semiramis, this nymph,

7 *Gallops the zodiac . . . coach*] Cf. Peele's *Anglorum Feriae*, 23–24: "the rising sun *Gallops the zodiac* in his fiery *wain*" (Bullen II, 344). Peele also in his *Descensus Astrææ*, lines 2–4, tells how time made the sun and moon "*gallop the zodiac.*" Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, III, ii, 1–4, where Juliet bids the horses of the sun-god to "gallop apace."

14 *pitch*] the full height to which a falcon soars; a hawking term.

16 *charming*] bewitching, in the literal sense.

17 *Prometheus . . . Caucasus*] Nowhere else in Shakespeare's work is specific mention made of Prometheus, who is best known as the hero of Aeschylus' tragedy *Prometheus Vinctus.* "Promethean" figures as an epithet of fire or heat twice in Shakespeare (*L. L. L.*, IV, iii, 300 and 347, and *Othello*, V, ii, 12).

22 *Semiramis*] a semi-mythical Queen of Babylon. The name is employed here, as II, iii, 118, *infra*, and in *T. of Shrew*, Induction, ii, 37, as a type of lust in accord with the account given of her in Pliny's *Nat. Hist.*, ch. 42. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, v, 85, merely mentions Semiramis as the ancestress of the hero Polydegmon. Golding's English translation omits the name.

*nymph*] Thus the First and Second Quartos. The later editions read *Queene.*

This siren, that will charm Rome's Saturnine,
And see his shipwreck and his commonweal's.
Holloa! what storm is this?

*Enter* DEMETRIUS *and* CHIRON, *braving*

DEM. Chiron, thy years want wit, thy wit wants edge,
And manners, to intrude where I am graced,
And may, for aught thou know'st, affected be.
CHI. Demetrius, thou dost over-ween in all,
And so in this, to bear me down with braves.
'T is not the difference of a year or two
Makes me less gracious, or thee more fortunate:
I am as able and as fit as thou
To serve, and to deserve my mistress' grace;
And that my sword upon thee shall approve,
And plead my passions for Lavinia's love.
AAR. [*Aside*] Clubs, clubs! these lovers will not keep the peace.
DEM. Why, boy, although our mother, unadvised,
Gave you a dancing-rapier by your side,

(stage direction) *braving*] wrangling, defying one another. Cf. l. 30, *infra*.
26 DEM. *Chiron, thy years want wit*] Pope made a new scene (Scene ii) begin here.
28 *affected*] loved.
29 *thou dost over-ween in all*] thou hast an excessive opinion of thyself in all regards.
30 *braves*] brags, bravado.
35 *approve*] prove.
37 *Clubs, clubs!*] the common Elizabethan street cry summoning the watchman to stop a brawl. Cf. *1 Hen. VI*, I, iii, 83.
38 *unadvised*] imprudently.
39 *a dancing-rapier*] a light sword worn by dancers for ornament, not for

Are you so desperate grown, to threat your friends?
Go to; have your lath glued within your sheath
Till you know better how to handle it.
CHI. Meanwhile, sir, with the little skill I have,
Full well shalt thou perceive how much I dare.
DEM. Ay, boy, grow ye so brave? [*They draw.*
AAR. [*Coming forward*] Why, how now, lords!
So near the emperor's palace dare you draw,
And maintain such a quarrel openly?
Full well I wot the ground of all this grudge:
I would not for a million of gold
The cause were known to them it most concerns;
Nor would your noble mother for much more
Be so dishonour'd in the court of Rome.
For shame, put up.
DEM. Not I, till I have sheathed
My rapier in his bosom, and withal
Thrust those reproachful speeches down his throat,
That he hath breathed in my dishonour here.
CHI. For that I am prepared and full resolved.
Foul-spoken coward! that thunder'st with thy tongue,
And with thy weapon nothing darest perform.
AAR. Away, I say!
Now, by the gods that warlike Goths adore,
This petty brabble will undo us all.
Why, lords, and think you not how dangerous

use. Cf. *All's Well*, II, i, 32–33: "No *sword worn* but one *to dance with*."

41 *your lath*] your sword of lath or wood.

48 *the ground of all this grudge*] the source of all this ill feeling. Cf. line 70, *infra*.

It is to jet upon a prince's right?
What, is Lavinia then become so loose,
Or Bassianus so degenerate,
That for her love such quarrels may be broach'd
Without controlment, justice, or revenge?
Young lords, beware! an should the empress know
This discord's ground, the music would not please.
CHI. I care not, I, knew she and all the world:
I love Lavinia more than all the world.
DEM. Youngling, learn thou to make some meaner choice:
Lavinia is thine elder brother's hope.
AAR. Why, are ye mad? or know ye not, in Rome
How furious and impatient they be,
And cannot brook competitors in love?
I tell you, lords, you do but plot your deaths
By this device.
CHI. Aaron, a thousand deaths
Would I propose to achieve her whom I love.
AAR. To achieve her! how?
DEM. Why makest thou it so strange?
She is a woman, therefore may be woo'd;
She is a woman, therefore may be won;

64 *jet*] encroach.
70 *ground*] a musical term for the simple melody on which the harmony of a song was developed.
80 *achieve*] win.
82–83 *She is . . . be won*] Cf. *1 Hen. VI*, V, iii, 78–79: "She 's beautiful and therefore to be *woo'd*; She is a woman, therefore to be *won*," and *Rich. III*, I, ii, 228–229: "Was ever woman in this humour *wooed*? Was ever woman in this humour *won*?"

She is Lavinia, therefore must be loved.
What, man! more water glideth by the mill
Than wots the miller of; and easy it is
Of a cut loaf to steal a shive, we know:
Though Bassianus be the emperor's brother,
Better than he have worn Vulcan's badge.

AAR. [*Aside*] Ay, and as good as Saturninus may.

DEM. Then why should he despair that knows to court it
With words, fair looks, and liberality?
What, hast not thou full often struck a doe,
And borne her cleanly by the keeper's nose?

AAR. Why, then, it seems, some certain snatch or so
Would serve your turns.

CHI. Ay, so the turn were served.

DEM. Aaron, thou hast hit it.

AAR. Would you had hit it too!
Then should not we be tired with this ado.
Why, hark ye, hark ye! and are you such fools
To square for this? would it offend you, then,
That both should speed?

CHI. Faith, not me.

87 *shive*] slice; the expression is proverbial.

89 *Vulcan's badge*] the cuckold's badge. Vulcan was the deluded husband of Venus.

93–94 *What, hast not . . . nose?*] These lines, which betray a sympathetic knowledge of poaching, read like a reminiscence of the dramatist's reputed exploits in Charlecote Park, which preceded Shakespeare's emigration from his native town of Stratford-on-Avon to London.

94 *cleanly*] neatly, adroitly.

95 *snatch*] hurried enjoyment.

100 *square*] quarrel.

DEM. Nor me, so I were one.
AAR. For shame, be friends, and join for that you jar:
'T is policy and stratagem must do
That you affect; and so must you resolve,
That what you cannot as you would achieve,
You must perforce accomplish as you may.
Take this of me: Lucrece was not more chaste
Than this Lavinia, Bassianus' love.
A speedier course than lingering languishment
Must we pursue, and I have found the path.
My lords, a solemn hunting is in hand;
There will the lovely Roman ladies troop:
The forest walks are wide and spacious;
And many unfrequented plots there are
Fitted by kind for rape and villany:
Single you thither then this dainty doe,
And strike her home by force, if not by words:
This way, or not at all, stand you in hope.
Come, come, our empress, with her sacred wit
To villany and vengeance consecrate,
Will we acquaint with all that we intend;
And she shall file our engines with advice,
That will not suffer you to square yourselves,

103 *join for that you jar*] combine to obtain what you quarrel over.
110 *lingering languishment*] prolonged sentimental wooing.
116 *by kind*] by nature. Cf. II, iii, 281, *infra*.
117 *Single*] Single out, isolate.
120 *sacred*] ironically used for accursed; like the Latin *sacer*.
123 *file our engines*] help our projects, make them run smooth.
124 *square yourselves*] put yourselves in the attitude of fight, quarrel with one another.

But to your wishes' height advance you both.
The emperor's court is like the house of Fame,
The palace full of tongues, of eyes and ears:
The woods are ruthless, dreadful, deaf and dull;
There speak, and strike, brave boys, and take your turns;
There serve your lust, shadow'd from heaven's eye,
And revel in Lavinia's treasury.

CHI. Thy counsel, lad, smells of no cowardice.

DEM. Sit fas aut nefas, till I find the stream
To cool this heat, a charm to calm these fits,
Per Styga, per manes vehor. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II — A FOREST NEAR ROME

*HORNS AND CRY OF HOUNDS HEARD*

*Enter* TITUS ANDRONICUS, *with* Hunters, &c., MARCUS, LUCIUS, QUINTUS, *and* MARTIUS

TIT. The hunt is up, the morn is bright and grey,
The fields are fragrant, and the woods are green:

126 *the house of Fame*] Cf. Peele's *Honour of the Garter*, line 164: "the spacious airy *house of Fame*."

133–135 *Sit fas . . . vehor*] The Latin words mean "Be it right or wrong, willy-nilly, . . . I am borne through the river Styx and through (the land of) disembodied spirits." The phrases are apparently a reminiscence of two lines in Seneca's *Hippolytus*, 1179–1180, "Et te per undas perque Tartareos lacus Per Styga per amnes igneos amens sequar." "I will follow thee in my madness through the waves of the sea, and the lakes of Hell, through the river Styx and the streams of fire."

1 *The hunt is up*] The cry of the huntsmen in starting the chase. The words open or form the burden of many early hunting songs. Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, III, v, 34.

*grey*] blue grey, or blue.

Uncouple here, and let us make a bay,
And wake the emperor and his lovely bride,
And rouse the prince, and ring a hunter's peal,
That all the court may echo with the noise.
Sons, let it be your charge, as it is ours,
To attend the emperor's person carefully.
I have been troubled in my sleep this night,
But dawning day new comfort hath inspired.

*A cry of hounds, and horns winded in a peal. Enter* SATURNINUS, TAMORA, BASSIANUS, LAVINIA, DEMETRIUS, CHIRON, *and their* Attendants

Many good morrows to your majesty;
Madam, to you as many and as good:
I promised your grace a hunter's peal.
SAT. And you have rung it lustily, my lords;
Somewhat too early for new-married ladies.
BAS. Lavinia, how say you?
LAV. I say, no;
I have been broad awake two hours and more.
SAT. Come on then; horse and chariots let us have,
And to our sport. [*To Tamora*] Madam, now shall ye see
Our Roman hunting.
MARC. I have dogs, my lord,
Will rouse the proudest panther in the chase,
And climb the highest promontory top.
TIT. And I have horse will follow where the game
Makes way, and run like swallows o'er the plain.

3 *Uncouple*] Slip off the leashes.
*make a bay*] rouse a barking in unison.

DEM. Chiron, we hunt not, we, with horse nor hound,
But hope to pluck a dainty doe to ground. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE III — A LONELY PART OF THE FOREST

*Enter* AARON, *with a bag of gold*

AAR. He that had wit would think that I had none,
To bury so much gold under a tree,
And never after to inherit it.
Let him that thinks of me so abjectly
Know that this gold must coin a stratagem,
Which, cunningly effected, will beget
A very excellent piece of villany:
And so repose, sweet gold, for their unrest [*Hides the gold.*
That have their alms out of the empress' chest.

*Enter* TAMORA

TAM. My lovely Aaron, wherefore look'st thou sad,
When every thing doth make a gleeful boast?
The birds chant melody on every bush;
The snake lies rolled in the cheerful sun;
The green leaves quiver with the cooling wind,
And make a chequer'd shadow on the ground:
Under their sweet shade, Aaron, let us sit,
And, whilst the babbling echo mocks the hounds,
Replying shrilly to the well-tuned horns,
As if a double hunt were heard at once,

1 AAR. *He that had wit*] Pope made a new scene (Scene iv) begin here.
3 *inherit*] possess.
8 *for their unrest*] to cause disquiet to those.
13 *rolled*] coiled. Cf. line 35, *infra*, where "unroll" is used for "uncoil."

Let us sit down and mark their yellowing noise;
And, after conflict such as was supposed
The wandering prince and Dido once enjoy'd,
When with a happy storm they were surprised,
And curtain'd with a counsel-keeping cave,
We may, each wreathed in the other's arms,
Our pastimes done, possess a golden slumber;
Whiles hounds and horns and sweet melodious birds
Be unto us as is a nurse's song
Of lullaby to bring her babe asleep.

AAR. Madam, though Venus govern your desires,
Saturn is dominator over mine:
What signifies my deadly-standing eye,
My silence and my cloudy melancholy,
My fleece of woolly hair that now uncurls
Even as an adder when she doth unroll
To do some fatal execution?
No, madam, these are no venereal signs:
Vengeance is in my heart, death in my hand,
Blood and revenge are hammering in my head.

20 *yellowing*] a form of "yelling." Thus the Quartos. The Folios read *yelping*.

22 *The wandering prince and Dido*] Cf. Virgil's *Æneid*, IV, 160–172 and V, iii, 80–83, *infra*. The story of Dido's relations with Æneas is fully told in Marlowe and Nashe's play, *Dido, Queen of Carthage*.

23 *happy*] opportune.

26 *golden slumber*] The epithet is conventional in poetry of earlier and later date. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, II, iii, 38: "*golden* sleep."

31 *Saturn*] the planet of hate and moroseness.

32 *deadly-standing eye*] murderously glaring eye.

35 *unroll*] uncoil. Cf. line 13, *supra*.

37 *venereal*] amorous.

Hark, Tamora, the empress of my soul,
Which never hopes more heaven than rests in thee,
This is the day of doom for Bassianus:
His Philomel must lose her tongue to-day,
Thy sons make pillage of her chastity,
And wash their hands in Bassianus' blood.
Seest thou this letter? take it up, I pray thee,
And give the king this fatal-plotted scroll.
Now question me no more; we are espied;
Here comes a parcel of our hopeful booty,
Which dreads not yet their lives' destruction.

TAM. Ah, my sweet Moor, sweeter to me than life!

AAR. No more, great empress; Bassianus comes:
Be cross with him, and I'll go fetch thy sons
To back thy quarrels, whatsoe'er they be. [*Exit.*

*Enter* BASSIANUS *and* LAVINIA

BAS. Who have we here? Rome's royal empress,
Unfurnish'd of her well-beseeming troop?
Or is it Dian, habited like her,
Who hath abandoned her holy groves
To see the general hunting in this forest?

---

43 *His Philomel . . . to-day*] There are many references in this play to the classical myth of Philomel, who was ravished by Tereus, husband of her sister Progne, and had her tongue cut out, so that the secret might not be revealed. Cf. II, iv, 26, 27, 41–43, IV, i, 42–54, V, ii, 195–196, *infra*. Ovid tells the full story in *Metamorphoses*, VI, 412–676. It is also found in Pettie's *Palace of Pleasure*, 1576 (2d tale), and in Gascoigne's *Complaynt of Philomene*, 1576. Shakespeare refers to the story in *Cymbeline*, II, ii, 45–46.

49 *parcel*] part, portion.

55 BAS. *Who have we here*] Pope made a new scene (Scene v) begin here.

TAM. Saucy controller of my private steps!
Had I the power that some say Dian had,
Thy temples should be planted presently
With horns, as was Actæon's, and the hounds
Should drive upon thy new-transformed limbs,
Unmannerly intruder as thou art!

LAV. Under your patience, gentle empress,
'T is thought you have a goodly gift in horning;
And to be doubted that your Moor and you
Are singled forth to try experiments:
Jove shield your husband from his hounds to-day!
'T is pity they should take him for a stag.

BAS. Believe me, queen, your swarth Cimmerian
Doth make your honour of his body's hue,
Spotted, detested, and abominable.
Why are you sequester'd from all your train,
Dismounted from your snow-white goodly steed,
And wander'd hither to an obscure plot,
Accompanied but with a barbarous Moor
If foul desire had not conducted you?

---

61–65 *Had I the power . . . as thou art!*] The story of Actæon the huntsman, who was transformed by Diana into a stag, is fully told by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*, III, 138 *seq.* For other references in Shakespeare to the tale see *M. Wives*, II, i, 106, and note, and lines 70–71, *infra.*

64 *drive upon*] rush upon. Thus all the early editions. Some editors substitute *thrive.*

69 *Are singled forth*] Have sallied forth alone.

72 *Cimmerian*] The Cimmerians were a wild people of the extreme east of Europe on whose lands it was fabled that the sun never shone. Hence "Cimmerian" is commonly used as an epithet of blackness, the colour of Aaron's complexion.

LAV. And, being intercepted in your sport,
Great reason that my noble lord be rated
For sauciness. I pray you, let us hence,
And let her joy her raven-colour'd love;
This valley fits the purpose passing well.
BAS. The king my brother shall have note of this.
LAV. Ay, for these slips have made him noted long:
Good king, to be so mightily abused!
TAM. Why have I patience to endure all this?

*Enter* DEMETRIUS *and* CHIRON

DEM. How now, dear sovereign, and our gracious mother!
Why doth your highness look so pale and wan?
TAM. Have I not reason, think you, to look pale?
These two have ticed me hither to this place:
A barren detested vale, you see it is;
The trees, though summer, yet forlorn and lean,
O'ercome with moss and baleful mistletoe:
Here never shines the sun; here nothing breeds,
Unless the nightly owl or fatal raven:
And when they show'd me this abhorred pit,
They told me, here, at dead time of the night,
A thousand fiends, a thousand hissing snakes,
Ten thousand swelling toads, as many urchins,

85 *note*] intelligence; Pope's emendation of the original reading *notice*.
87 *abused*] deceived.
92 *ticed*] enticed.
95 *O'ercome*] Overspread.
*baleful mistletoe*] mistletoe berries are poisonous.
101 *urchins*] hedgehogs. The word is still used thus in "sea-*urchins*."

Would make such fearful and confused cries,
As any mortal body hearing it
Should straight fall mad, or else die suddenly.
No sooner had they told this hellish tale,
But straight they told me they would bind me here
Unto the body of a dismal yew,
And leave me to this miserable death:
And then they call'd me foul adultress,
Lascivious Goth, and all the bitterest terms
That ever ear did hear to such effect:
And, had you not by wondrous fortune come,
This vengeance on me had they executed.
Revenge it, as you love your mother's life,
Or be ye not henceforth call'd my children.

DEM. This is a witness that I am thy son.
[*Stabs Bassianus.*

CHI. And this for me, struck home to show my strength. [*Also stabs Bassianus, who dies.*

LAV. Ay, come, Semiramis, nay, barbarous Tamora,
For no name fits thy nature but thy own!

TAM. Give me the poniard; you shall know, my boys,
Your mother's hand shall right your mother's wrong.

DEM. Stay, madam; here is more belongs to her;
First thrash the corn, then after burn the straw;
This minion stood upon her chastity,
Upon her nuptial vow, her loyalty,
And with that painted hope braves your mightiness:
And shall she carry this unto her grave?

110 *Goth*] "Goth" was usually pronounced like "goat." For the punning use of the word, cf. *As you like it*, III, iii, 6.

126 *painted hope*] specious assurance.

CHI. An if she do, I would I were an eunuch.
Drag hence her husband to some secret hole,
And make his dead trunk pillow to our lust.
TAM. But when ye have the honey ye desire,
Let not this wasp outlive, us both to sting.
CHI. I warrant you, madam, we will make that sure.
Come, mistress, now perforce we will enjoy
That nice-preserved honesty of yours.
LAV. O Tamora! thou bear'st a woman's face —
TAM. I will not hear her speak; away with her!
LAV. Sweet lords, entreat her hear me but a word.
DEM. Listen, fair madam: let it be your glory
To see her tears, but be your heart to them
As unrelenting flint to drops of rain.
LAV. When did the tiger's young ones teach the dam?
O, do not learn her wrath; she taught it thee;
The milk thou suck'dst from her did turn to marble;
Even at thy teat thou hadst thy tyranny.
Yet every mother breeds not sons alike:
[*To Chiron*] Do thou entreat her show a woman pity.
CHI. What, wouldst thou have me prove myself a bastard?
LAV. 'T is true; the raven doth not hatch a lark:
Yet have I heard, — O, could I find it now! —
The lion, moved with pity, did endure
To have his princely paws pared all away:

---

143 *learn*] teach.

149 *the raven . . . a lark*] Cf. Horace, *Odes*, IV, iv, 31, 32: "*neque* imbellem feroces *Progenerant aquilæ columbam*" (nor do fierce eagles breed the peaceful dove).

Some say that ravens foster forlorn children,
The whilst their own birds famish in their nests:
O, be to me, though thy hard heart say no,
Nothing so kind, but something pitiful!

TAM. I know not what it means: away with her!

LAV. O, let me teach thee! for my father's sake,
That gave thee life, when well he might have slain thee,
Be not obdurate, open thy deaf ears.

TAM. Hadst thou in person ne'er offended me,
Even for his sake am I pitiless.
Remember, boys, I pour'd forth tears in vain,
To save your brother from the sacrifice;
But fierce Andronicus would not relent:
Therefore, away with her, and use her as you will;
The worse to her, the better loved of me.

LAV. O Tamora, be call'd a gentle queen,
And with thine own hands kill me in this place!
For 't is not life that I have begg'd so long;
Poor I was slain when Bassianus died.

TAM. What begg'st thou then? fond woman, let me go.

LAV. 'T is present death I beg; and one thing more
That womanhood denies my tongue to tell:
O, keep me from their worse than killing lust,
And tumble me into some loathsome pit,
Where never man's eye may behold my body:
Do this, and be a charitable murderer.

TAM. So should I rob my sweet sons of their fee:
No, let them satisfy their lust on thee.

DEM. Away! for thou hast stay'd us here too long.

LAV. No grace? no womanhood? Ah, beastly creature!
The blot and enemy to our general name!
Confusion fall —
CHI. Nay, then I'll stop your mouth. Bring thou her husband:
This is the hole where Aaron bid us hide him.
[*Demetrius throws the body of Bassianus into the pit; then exeunt Demetrius and Chiron, dragging off Lavinia.*
TAM. Farewell, my sons; see that you make her sure.
Ne'er let my heart know merry cheer indeed,
Till all the Andronici be made away.
Now will I hence to seek my lovely Moor,
And let my spleenful sons this trull deflower. [*Exit.*

*Re-enter* AARON, *with* QUINTUS *and* MARTIUS

AAR. Come on, my lords, the better foot before:
Straight will I bring you to the loathsome pit
Where I espied the panther fast asleep.
QUIN. My sight is very dull, whate'er it bodes.
MART. And mine, I promise you; were it not for shame,
Well could I leave our sport to sleep awhile.
[*Falls into the pit.*
QUIN. What, art thou fall'n? What subtle hole is this,
Whose mouth is cover'd with rude-growing briers,

192 AAR. *Come on, my lords*] Pope and Capell make a new scene here, Pope numbering it Scene vi, and Capell Scene iv.

Upon whose leaves are drops of new-shed blood
As fresh as morning dew distill'd on flowers?
A very fatal place it seems to me.
Speak, brother, hast thou hurt thee with the fall?
MART. O brother, with the dismal'st object hurt
That ever eye with sight made heart lament!
AAR. [*Aside*] Now will I fetch the king to find them here,
That he thereby may have a likely guess
How these were they that made away his brother. [*Exit.*
MART. Why dost not comfort me, and help me out
From this unhallow'd and blood-stained hole?
QUIN. I am surprised with an uncouth fear;
A chilling sweat o'er-runs my trembling joints;
My heart suspects more than mine eye can see.
MART. To prove thou hast a true-divining heart,
Aaron and thou look down into this den,
And see a fearful sight of blood and death.
QUIN. Aaron is gone; and my compassionate heart
Will not permit mine eyes once to behold
The thing whereat it trembles by surmise:
O, tell me how it is; for ne'er till now
Was I a child to fear I know not what.
MART. Lord Bassianus lies embrewed here,
All on a heap, like to a slaughter'd lamb,
In this detested, dark, blood-drinking pit.
QUIN. If it be dark, how dost thou know 't is he?

222 *embrewed here*] steeped in blood. Thus the Second Quarto and all later editions. The First Quarto (1594) reads *bereaud in blood*, for which an early manuscript gloss substitutes *here reau'd of lyfe*.

MART. Upon his bloody finger he doth wear
A precious ring, that lightens all the hole,
Which, like a taper in some monument,
Doth shine upon the dead man's earthy cheeks,
And shows the ragged entrails of the pit:
So pale did shine the moon on Pyramus
When he by night lay bathed in maiden blood.
O brother, help me with thy fainting hand —
If fear hath made thee faint, as me it hath —
Out of this fell devouring receptacle,
As hateful as Cocytus' misty mouth.
QUIN. Reach me thy hand, that I may help thee out;
Or, wanting strength to do thee so much good,
I may be pluck'd into the swallowing womb
Of this deep pit, poor Bassianus' grave.
I have no strength to pluck thee to the brink.
MART. Nor I no strength to climb without thy help.

227 *A precious ring . . . all the hole*] The gem known as the carbuncle was commonly credited with emitting light. Cf. *Hen. VIII*, II, iii, 78–79: "A *gem To lighten* all this isle."

230 *ragged entrails*] rugged interior.

231 *Pyramus*] This reference to the death of Pyramus seems to come direct from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, IV, 55–166. Shakespeare parodies the legend in *Mids. N. Dr.* See also *Rom. and Jul.*, II, iv, 42.

235 *receptacle*] accented on the first and third syllables. Cf. I, i, 92, *supra*.

236 *Cocytus'*] One of the six rivers of Hades. Cf. Virgil, *Æneid*, VI, 323: "Cocyti stagna alta." Cocytus is nowhere else mentioned in Shakespeare, though reference to the other rivers, Lethe and Styx (cf. I, i, 88, and II, i, 135, *supra*), are not infrequent elsewhere. Acheron, a fourth river of Hades, is mentioned as "a burning lake," IV, iii, 43, *infra*. Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, III, ii, 357, and note.

QUIN. Thy hand once more; I will not loose again,
Till thou art here aloft, or I below:
Thou canst not come to me: I come to thee. [*Falls in.*

*Enter* SATURNINUS *with* AARON

SAT. Along with me: I'll see what hole is here,
And what he is that now is leap'd into it.
Say, who art thou that lately didst descend
Into this gaping hollow of the earth?
MART. The unhappy son of old Andronicus;
Brought hither in a most unlucky hour,
To find thy brother Bassianus dead.
SAT. My brother dead! I know thou dost but jest:
He and his lady both are at the lodge
Upon the north side of this pleasant chase;
'T is not an hour since I left them there.
MART. We know not where you left them all alive;
But, out, alas! here have we found him dead.

*Re-enter* TAMORA, *with* Attendants; TITUS ANDRONICUS, *and* LUCIUS

TAM. Where is my lord the king?
SAT. Here, Tamora; though grieved with killing grief.
TAM. Where is thy brother Bassianus?
SAT. Now to the bottom dost thou search my wound:
Poor Bassianus here lies murdered.
TAM. [*Giving a letter*] Then all too late I bring this fatal writ,

255 *chase*] any unenclosed tract of land.

The complot of this timeless tragedy;
And wonder greatly that man's face can fold
In pleasing smiles such murderous tyranny.
SAT. [*Reads*] "An if we miss to meet him handsomely—
Sweet huntsman, Bassianus 't is we mean —
Do thou so much as dig the grave for him:
Thou know'st our meaning. Look for thy reward
Among the nettles at the elder-tree,
Which overshades the mouth of that same pit
Where we decreed to bury Bassianus.
Do this and purchase us thy lasting friends."
O Tamora! was ever heard the like?
This is the pit, and this the elder-tree.
Look, sirs, if you can find the huntsman out
That should have murder'd Bassianus here.
AAR. My gracious lord, here is the bag of gold.
SAT. [*To Titus*] Two of thy whelps, fell curs of bloody kind,
Have here bereft my brother of his life.
Sirs, drag them from the pit unto the prison:
There let them bide until we have devised
Some never-heard-of torturing pain for them.
TAM. What, are they in this pit? O wondrous thing!
How easily murder is discovered!
TIT. High emperor, upon my feeble knee
I beg this boon, with tears not lightly shed,
That this fell fault of my accursed sons,
Accursed, if the fault be proved in them —

---

265 *timeless*] untimely; a very common usage.
281 *kind*] nature or strain. Cf. II, i, 116, *supra*.

SAT. If it be proved! you see it is apparent.
Who found this letter? Tamora, was it you?
TAM. Andronicus himself did take it up.
TIT. I did, my lord: yet let me be their bail;
For, by my fathers' reverend tomb, I vow
They shall be ready at your highness' will,
To answer their suspicion with their lives.
SAT. Thou shalt not bail them: see thou follow me.
Some bring the murder'd body, some the murderers:
Let them not speak a word; the guilt is plain;
For, by my soul, were there worse end than death,
That end upon them should be executed.
TAM. Andronicus, I will entreat the king:
Fear not thy sons; they shall do well enough.
TIT. Come, Lucius, come; stay not to talk with them.
[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE IV — ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST

*Enter* DEMETRIUS *and* CHIRON, *with* LAVINIA, *ravished; her hands cut off, and her tongue cut out*

DEM. So, now go tell, an if thy tongue can speak,
Who 't was that cut thy tongue and ravish'd thee.
CHI. Write down thy mind, bewray thy meaning so,
An if thy stumps will let thee play the scribe.
DEM. See, how with signs and tokens she can scrowl.

305 *Fear not thy sons*] Have no fear about thy sons.

1 DEM. *So, now go tell*] Capell numbers this Scene v; Pope makes it Scene ix.

5 *scrowl*] an old form of scroll or scrawl, *i. e.*, write. Thus the Quartos. The Folios read *scowl*.

CHI. Go home, call for sweet water, wash thy hands.
DEM. She hath no tongue to call, nor hands to wash;
And so let's leave her to her silent walks.
CHI. An 't were my case, I should go hang myself.
DEM. If thou hadst hands to help thee knit the cord.
[*Exeunt Demetrius and Chiron.*

*Horns winded within. Enter* MARCUS, *from hunting*

MAR. Who is this? my niece, that flies away so fast!
Cousin, a word; where is your husband?
If I do dream, would all my wealth would wake me!
If I do wake, some planet strike me down,
That I may slumber in eternal sleep!
Speak, gentle niece, what stern ungentle hands
Have lopp'd and hew'd and made thy body bare
Of her two branches, those sweet ornaments,
Whose circling shadows kings have sought to sleep in,
And might not gain so great a happiness
As have thy love? Why dost not speak to me?
Alas, a crimson river of warm blood,
Like to a bubbling fountain stirr'd with wind,
Doth rise and fall between thy rosed lips,
Coming and going with thy honey breath.
But, sure, some Tereus hath deflowered thee,
And, lest thou shouldst detect him, cut thy tongue.
Ah, now thou turn'st away thy face for shame!

6 *sweet water*] perfumed water. Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, V, iii, 14.

13 *If I do dream . . . wake me*] If this be a dream, I would give all my wealth to awake from it.

26 *Tereus*] Tereus, according to Ovid, cut out the tongue of Philomela (sister of his wife Progne) after he had ravished her. See note on II, iii, 43, *supra*.

And, notwithstanding all this loss of blood,
As from a conduit with three issuing spouts,
Yet do thy cheeks look red as Titan's face
Blushing to be encounter'd with a cloud.
Shall I speak for thee? shall I say 't is so?
O, that I knew thy heart; and knew the beast,
That I might rail at him, to ease my mind!
Sorrow concealed, like an oven stopp'd,
Doth burn the heart to cinders where it is.
Fair Philomel, why she but lost her tongue,
And in a tedious sampler sew'd her mind:
But, lovely niece, that mean is cut from thee;
A craftier Tereus, cousin, hast thou met,
And he hath cut those pretty fingers off,
That could have better sew'd than Philomel.
O, had the monster seen those lily hands
Tremble, like aspen-leaves, upon a lute,
And make the silken strings delight to kiss them,
He would not then have touch'd them for his life!
Or, had he heard the heavenly harmony
Which that sweet tongue hath made,
He would have dropp'd his knife, and fell asleep
As Cerberus at the Thracian poet's feet.

31 *Titan's face*] The sun's face. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, II, iv, 114.

41–43 *A craftier Tereus . . . Philomel*] In the Ovidian tale the outraged and tongueless Philomela embroiders on a piece of stuff words narrating her misfortunes, and forwards it to her sister Progne.

46 *And make . . . to kiss them*] Cf. *Sonnet* cxxviii, 5–6: "I envy those jacks [*sc.* of a musical instrument] that nimble leap To kiss the tender inward of thy hand."

51 *As Cerberus . . . Thracian poet's feet*] Virgil in his *Georgics*, iv, 483

Come, let us go and make thy father blind;
For such a sight will blind a father's eye:
One hour's storm will drown the fragrant meads;
What will whole months of tears thy father's eyes?
Do not draw back, for we will mourn with thee:
O, could our mourning ease thy misery! [*Exeunt.*

("tenuit inhians tria Cerberus ora," Cerberus held his triple mouth agape), seems the only classical author who specifically mentions Cerberus as succumbing to the charms of Orpheus' music in the infernal regions. See *Lucrece*, 553, "And moody Pluto winks while Orpheus plays."

## ACT THIRD — SCENE I — ROME

*A STREET*

*Enter* Judges, Senators, *and* Tribunes, *with* MARTIUS *and* QUINTUS, *bound, passing on to the place of execution;* TITUS *going before, pleading*

TITUS

EAR ME, GRAVE FATHERS! noble tribunes, stay!
For pity of mine age, whose youth was spent
In dangerous wars, whilst you securely slept;
For all my blood in Rome's great quarrel shed;
For all the frosty nights that I have watch'd;
And for these bitter tears which now you see
Filling the aged wrinkles in my cheeks;
Be pitiful to my condemned sons,
Whose souls are not corrupted as 't is thought.

For two and twenty sons I never wept,
Because they died in honour's lofty bed.
[*Lieth down; the Judges, &c., pass by him, and Exeunt.*
For these, tribunes, in the dust I write
My heart's deep languor and my soul's sad tears:
Let my tears stanch the earth's dry appetite;
My sons' sweet blood will make it shame and blush.
O earth, I will befriend thee more with rain,
That shall distil from these two ancient urns,
Than youthful April shall with all his showers:
In summer's drought I'll drop upon thee still;
In winter with warm tears I'll melt the snow,
And keep eternal spring-time on thy face,
So thou refuse to drink my dear sons' blood.

*Enter* LUCIUS, *with his weapon drawn*

O reverend tribunes! O gentle, aged men!
Unbind my sons, reverse the doom of death;
And let me say, that never wept before,
My tears are now prevailing orators.

LUC. O noble father, you lament in vain:
The tribunes hear you not; no man is by;
And you recount your sorrows to a stone.

TIT. Ah, Lucius, for thy brothers let me plead.
Grave tribunes, once more I entreat of you, —

LUC. My gracious lord, no tribune hears you speak.

---

12 *For these, tribunes*] Thus the Quartos and the First Folio. The later Folios supplied the missing syllable required to complete the metre by duplicating *these* before *tribunes*. Malone read *For these, good tribunes*.

17 *urns*] Hanmer's correction of the original reading *ruins*.

TIT. Why, 't is no matter, man: if they did hear,
They would not mark me; or if they did mark,
They would not pity me; yet plead I must,
And bootless unto them. . . .
Therefore I tell my sorrows to the stones;
Who, though they cannot answer my distress,
Yet in some sort they are better than the tribunes,
For that they will not intercept my tale:
When I do weep, they humbly at my feet
Receive my tears, and seem to weep with me;
And, were they but attired in grave weeds,
Rome could afford no tribune like to these.
A stone is soft as wax, tribunes more hard than stones;
A stone is silent and offendeth not,
And tribunes with their tongues doom men to death. [*Rises.*
But wherefore stand'st thou with thy weapon drawn?

LUC. To rescue my two brothers from their death:
For which attempt the judges have pronounced
My everlasting doom of banishment.

TIT. O happy man! they have befriended thee.
Why, foolish Lucius, dost thou not perceive
That Rome is but a wilderness of tigers?
Tigers must prey, and Rome affords no prey

34–36 *or if they did . . . bootless unto them . . .*] Thus the Quartos of 1594 and 1600, save for the dots indicating missing words after *them.* These dots are due to the Cambridge editors. It is doubtful if there is any real hiatus. A short line is not without example. The 1611 Quarto omits line 35 (*They would* not. . . . *I must*) and reads *All bootlesse* for *And bootless* in line 36. The Folios read *heare* for *mark* (line 34), and omit *yet plead I must . . . them* (line 35).

54 *a wilderness of tigers*] Cf. line 94, *infra:* "a *wilderness* of sea," and *Merch. of Ven.*, III, i, 106: "a *wilderness* of monkeys."

But me and mine: how happy art thou then,
From these devourers to be banished!
But who comes with our brother Marcus here?

*Enter* MARCUS *and* LAVINIA

MARC. Titus, prepare thy aged eyes to weep;
Or, if not so, thy noble heart to break:
I bring consuming sorrow to thine age.
TIT. Will it consume me? let me see it then.
MARC. This was thy daughter.
TIT. Why, Marcus, so she is.
LUC. Ay me, this object kills me!
TIT. Faint-hearted boy, arise, and look upon her.
Speak, Lavinia, what accursed hand
Hath made thee handless in thy father's sight?
What fool hath added water to the sea,
Or brought a faggot to bright-burning Troy?
My grief was at the height before thou camest;
And now, like Nilus, it disdaineth bounds.
Give me a sword, I'll chop off my hands too;
For they have fought for Rome, and all in vain;
And they have nursed this woe, in feeding life;
In bootless prayer have they been held up,
And they have served me to effectless use:
Now all the service I require of them
Is, that the one will help to cut the other.

66 *Lavinia*] Thus the Quartos and the First Folio. The later Folios read *my Lavinia.*

71 *like Nilus*] an allusion to the annual overflow of the river Nile. Cf. *Ant. and Cleop.*, I, ii, 46: "the o'erflowing *Nilus.*"

'T is well, Lavinia, that thou hast no hands;
For hands to do Rome service is but vain.
LUC. Speak, gentle sister, who hath martyr'd thee?
MARC. O, that delightful engine of her thoughts,
That blabb'd them with such pleasing eloquence,
Is torn from forth that pretty hollow cage,
Where, like a sweet melodious bird, it sung
Sweet varied notes, enchanting every ear!
LUC. O, say thou for her, who hath done this deed?
MARC. O, thus I found her, straying in the park,
Seeking to hide herself, as doth the deer
That hath received some unrecuring wound.
TIT. It was my dear; and he that wounded her
Hath hurt me more than had he kill'd me dead:
For now I stand as one upon a rock,
Environ'd with a wilderness of sea;
Who marks the waxing tide grow wave by wave,
Expecting ever when some envious surge
Will in his brinish bowels swallow him.
This way to death my wretched sons are gone;
Here stands my other son, a banish'd man;
And here my brother, weeping at my woes:
But that which gives my soul the greatest spurn,
Is dear Lavinia, dearer than my soul.
Had I but seen thy picture in this plight,

---

82 *engine of her thoughts*] tongue. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 367: "Once more *the engine of her thoughts* began."

90 *unrecuring*] incurable.

91 *my dear*] a favourite pun with Shakespeare. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 231: "I'll be a park, and thou shalt be my *deer*," and *M. Wives*, V, v, 15.

It would have madded me: what shall I do,
Now I behold thy lively body so?
Thou hast no hands, to wipe away thy tears;
Nor tongue, to tell me who hath martyr'd thee:
Thy husband he is dead; and for his death
Thy brothers are condemn'd, and dead by this.
Look, Marcus! ah, son Lucius, look on her!
When I did name her brothers, then fresh tears
Stood on her cheeks, as doth the honey-dew
Upon a gather'd lily almost wither'd.
MARC. Perchance she weeps because they kill'd her husband;
Perchance because she knows them innocent.
TIT. If they did kill thy husband, then be joyful,
Because the law hath ta'en revenge on them.
No, no, they would not do so foul a deed;
Witness the sorrow that their sister makes.
Gentle Lavinia, let me kiss thy lips;
Or make some sign how I may do thee ease:
Shall thy good uncle, and thy brother Lucius,
And thou, and I, sit round about some fountain,
Looking all downwards, to behold our cheeks
How they are stain'd, as meadows yet not dry

105 *lively*] living. Cf. V, iii, 44, *infra*.

112 *the honey-dew*] the sweet sticky secretion deposited by the tiny insect, generically called aphis, on the leaves of flowers.

125 *as meadows*] The First Quarto (1594) reads *like meadows;* the Second Quarto and all other early editions substitute *in meadows*, which Rowe corrected to *like meadows* in accidental agreement with the original reading, which he had not seen. *As meadows* is Collier's emendation of *in meadows*.

With miry slime left on them by a flood?
And in the fountain shall we gaze so long
Till the fresh taste be taken from that clearness,
And made a brine-pit with our bitter tears?
Or shall we cut away our hands, like thine?
Or shall we bite our tongues, and in dumb shows
Pass the remainder of our hateful days?
What shall we do? let us, that have our tongues,
Plot some device of further misery,
To make us wonder'd at in time to come.

LUC. Sweet father, cease your tears; for, at your grief,
See how my wretched sister sobs and weeps.

MARC. Patience, dear niece. Good Titus, dry thine eyes.

TIT. Ah, Marcus, Marcus! brother, well I wot
Thy napkin cannot drink a tear of mine,
For thou, poor man, hast drown'd it with thine own.

LUC. Ah, my Lavinia, I will wipe thy cheeks.

TIT. Mark, Marcus, mark! I understand her signs:
Had she a tongue to speak, now would she say
That to her brother which I said to thee:
His napkin, with his true tears all bewet,
Can do no service on her sorrowful cheeks.
O, what a sympathy of woe is this,
As far from help as Limbo is from bliss!

---

149 *Limbo*] A region on the borders of hell to which the fathers or patriarchs of old were believed to be consigned. The full title "Limbus Patrum" is more correctly quoted in *Hen. VIII*, V, iv, 61.

*Enter* AARON

AAR. Titus Andronicus, my lord the emperor
Sends thee this word, that, if thou love thy sons,
Let Marcus, Lucius, or thyself, old Titus,
Or any one of you, chop off your hand,
And send it to the king: he for the same
Will send thee hither both thy sons alive;
And that shall be the ransom for their fault.
TIT. O gracious emperor! O gentle Aaron!
Did ever raven sing so like a lark,
That gives sweet tidings of the sun's uprise?
With all my heart, I'll send the emperor
My hand:
Good Aaron, wilt thou help to chop it off?
LUC. Stay, father! for that noble hand of thine,
That hath thrown down so many enemies,
Shall not be sent: my hand will serve the turn:
My youth can better spare my blood than you;
And therefore mine shall save my brothers' lives.
MARC. Which of your hands hath not defended Rome,
And rear'd aloft the bloody battle-axe,
Writing destruction on the enemy's castle?
O, none of both but are of high desert:
My hand hath been but idle; let it serve

170 *castle*] Thus the original reading. Theobald substituted *casque*, but "castle" is found in the sense of "helmet of exceptional power of resistance." Cf. *Troil. and Cress.*, V, ii, 187: "Stand fast, and wear a *castle* on thy head."

To ransom my two nephews from their death;
Then have I kept it to a worthy end.

AAR. Nay, come, agree whose hand shall go along,
For fear they die before their pardon come.

MARC. My hand shall go.

LUC. By heaven, it shall not go!

TIT. Sirs, strive no more: such wither'd herbs as these
Are meet for plucking up, and therefore mine.

LUC. Sweet father, if I shall be thought thy son,
Let me redeem my brothers both from death.

MARC. And, for our father's sake and mother's care,
Now let me show a brother's love to thee.

TIT. Agree between you; I will spare my hand.

LUC. Then I'll go fetch an axe.

MARC. But I will use the axe.

[*Exeunt Lucius and Marcus.*

TIT. Come hither, Aaron; I'll deceive them both:
Lend me thy hand, and I will give thee mine.

AAR. [*Aside*] If that be call'd deceit, I will be honest,
And never, whilst I live, deceive men so:
But I'll deceive you in another sort,
And that you'll say, ere half an hour pass.

[*Cuts off Titus's hand.*

*Re-enter* LUCIUS *and* MARCUS

TIT. Now stay your strife: what shall be is dispatch'd.
Good Aaron, give his majesty my hand:
Tell him it was a hand that warded him
From thousand dangers; bid him bury it;

More hath it merited; that let it have.
As for my sons, say I account of them
As jewels purchased at an easy price;
And yet dear too, because I bought mine own.
AAR. I go, Andronicus: and for thy hand
Look by and by to have thy sons with thee.
[*Aside*] Their heads, I mean. O, how this villany
Doth fat me with the very thoughts of it!
Let fools do good, and fair men call for grace,
Aaron will have his soul black like his face. [*Exit.*
TIT. O, here I lift this one hand up to heaven,
And bow this feeble ruin to the earth:
If any power pities wretched tears,
To that I call! [*To Lav.*] What, would thou kneel with me?
Do, then, dear heart; for heaven shall hear our prayers;
Or with our sighs we'll breathe the welkin dim,
And stain the sun with fog, as sometime clouds
When they do hug him in their melting bosoms.
MARC. O brother, speak with possibilities,
And do not break into these deep extremes.
TIT. Is not my sorrow deep, having no bottom?
Then be my passions bottomless with them.
MARC. But yet let reason govern thy lament.
TIT. If there were reason for these miseries,
Then into limits could I bind my woes:

---

204 *fat*] fatten. Cf. *Merch. of Ven.*, I, iii, 42: "I will feed *fat* the ancient grudge I bear him."

212 *breathe . . . dim*] Cf. Marlowe's *Faustus*, I, iii, 4: "And *dims the welkin with her pitchy breath.*"

When heaven doth weep, doth not the earth o'erflow?
If the winds rage, doth not the sea wax mad,
Threatening the welkin with his big-swoln face?
And wilt thou have a reason for this coil?
I am the sea; hark, how her sighs do blow!
She is the weeping welkin, I the earth:
Then must my sea be moved with her sighs;
Then must my earth with her continual tears
Become a deluge, overflow'd and drown'd:
For why my bowels cannot hide her woes,
But like a drunkard must I vomit them.
Then give me leave; for losers will have leave
To ease their stomachs with their bitter tongues.

*Enter a* Messenger, *with two heads and a hand*

MESS. Worthy Andronicus, ill art thou repaid
For that good hand thou sent'st the emperor.
Here are the heads of thy two noble sons;
And here's thy hand, in scorn to thee sent back,
Thy griefs their sports, thy resolution mock'd:
That woe is me to think upon thy woes,
More than remembrance of my father's death. [*Exit.*

MARC. Now let hot Ætna cool in Sicily,
And be my heart an ever-burning hell!

225 *coil*] commotion.

226 *blow*] Thus the Second and later Folios. The earlier editions read *flow*.

231 *For why*] Because.

233–234 *for losers . . . tongues*] a proverbial phrase, which is quoted in *2 Hen. VI*, III, i, 185: "And well *such losers may have leave to speak*."

These miseries are more than may be borne.
To weep with them that weep doth ease some deal,
But sorrow flouted at is double death.

LUC. Ah, that this sight should make so deep a wound,
And yet detested life not shrink thereat!
That ever death should let life bear his name,
Where life hath no more interest but to breathe!

[*Lavinia kisses Titus.*

MARC. Alas, poor heart, that kiss is comfortless
As frozen water to a starved snake.

TIT. When will this fearful slumber have an end?

MARC. Now, farewell, flattery: die, Andronicus;
Thou dost not slumber: see, thy two sons' heads,
Thy warlike hand, thy mangled daughter here,
Thy other banish'd son with this dear sight
Struck pale and bloodless, and thy brother, I,
Even like a stony image, cold and numb.
Ah, now no more will I control thy griefs:
Rend off thy silver hair, thy other hand
Gnawing with thy teeth; and be this dismal sight
The closing up of our most wretched eyes:
Now is a time to storm; why art thou still?

TIT. Ha, ha, ha!

MARC. Why dost thou laugh? it fits not with this hour.

TIT. Why, I have not another tear to shed:
Besides, this sorrow is an enemy,
And would usurp upon my watery eyes,
And make them blind with tributary tears:

270 *tributary tears*] The phrase is repeated I, i, 159, *supra*.

Then which way shall I find Revenge's cave?
For these two heads do seem to speak to me,
And threat me I shall never come to bliss
Till all these mischiefs be return'd again
Even in their throats that have committed them.
Come, let me see what task I have to do.
You heavy people, circle me about,
That I may turn me to each one of you,
And swear unto my soul to right your wrongs.
The vow is made. Come, brother, take a head;
And in this hand the other will I bear.
Lavinia, thou shalt be employ'd in these things:
Bear thou my hand, sweet wench, between thy teeth.
As for thee, boy, go get thee from my sight;
Thou art an exile, and thou must not stay:
Hie to the Goths, and raise an army there:
And, if you love me, as I think you do,
Let's kiss and part, for we have much to do.

[*Exeunt all but Lucius.*

LUC. Farewell, Andronicus, my noble father,
The wofull'st man that ever lived in Rome:
Farewell, proud Rome; till Lucius come again,
He leaves his pledges dearer than his life:
Farewell, Lavinia, my noble sister;
O, would thou wert as thou tofore hast been!

---

277 *heavy*] sad, grief-stricken.

282 *Lavinia . . . things*] Thus the Second and later Folios. The First Folio reads with the Quartos *And Lavinia*, but substitute *things* for the Quarto reading *arms*, a word which makes no sense.

292 *leaves*] Rowe's correction of the original reading *loues*.

But now nor Lucius nor Lavinia lives
But in oblivion and hateful griefs.
If Lucius live, he will requite your wrongs;
And make proud Saturnine and his empress
Beg at the gates, like Tarquin and his queen.
Now will I to the Goths and raise a power,
To be revenged on Rome and Saturnine. [*Exit.*

## SCENE II — A ROOM IN TITUS'S HOUSE

*A BANQUET SET OUT*

*Enter* TITUS, MARCUS, LAVINIA, *and young* LUCIUS, *a* Boy

TIT. So, so; now sit: and look you eat no more
Than will preserve just so much strength in us
As will revenge those bitter woes of ours.
Marcus, unknit that sorrow-wreathen knot:
Thy niece and I, poor creatures, want our hands,
And cannot passionate our tenfold grief
With folded arms. This poor right hand of mine
Is left to tyrannize upon my breast;
Who, when my heart, all mad with misery,

---

300 *a power*] an army.

1–85 TIT. *So, so . . . dazzle*] The whole of this scene is omitted from the Quartos. It only figures in the Folios.

4 *that sorrow-wreathen knot*] Marcus' folded arms, the posture ordinarily associated with deep melancholy.

6 *passionate*] express with passionate gesture.

Beats in this hollow prison of my flesh,
Then thus I thump it down.
[*To Lavinia*] Thou map of woe, that thus dost talk in signs!
When thy poor heart beats with outrageous beating,
Thou canst not strike it thus to make it still.
Wound it with sighing, girl, kill it with groans;
Or get some little knife between thy teeth,
And just against thy heart make thou a hole;
That all the tears that thy poor eyes let fall
May run into that sink, and soaking in
Drown the lamenting fool in sea-salt tears.

MARC. Fie, brother, fie! teach her not thus to lay
Such violent hands upon her tender life.

TIT. How now! has sorrow made thee dote already?
Why, Marcus, no man should be mad but I.
What violent hands can she lay on her life?
Ah, wherefore dost thou urge the name of hands;
To bid Æneas tell the tale twice o'er,
How Troy was burnt and he made miserable?
O, handle not the theme, to talk of hands,
Lest we remember still that we have none.
Fie, fie, how franticly I square my talk,
As if we should forget we had no hands,

12 *Thou map of woe*] Cf. *Rich. II*, V, i, 12: "Thou *map* of honour."
15 *Wound it with sighing*] It was a common belief that sighs consumed the heart's blood. Cf. *3 Hen. VI*, IV, iv, 22: "*blood-sucking sighs.*"
20 *fool*] here a term of endearment.
27 *To bid Æneas . . . twice o'er*] Cf. Virgil, *Æneid*, II, 3 *seq.*: "infandum, regina, jubes *renovare dolorem.*"
31 *square*] shape, regulate.

If Marcus did not name the word of hands!
Come, let 's fall to; and, gentle girl, eat this:
Here is no drink. Hark, Marcus, what she says;
I can interpret all her martyr'd signs;
She says she drinks no other drink but tears,
Brew'd with her sorrow, mesh'd upon her cheeks:
Speechless complainer, I will learn thy thought;
In thy dumb action will I be as perfect
As begging hermits in their holy prayers:
Thou shalt not sigh, nor hold thy stumps to heaven,
Nor wink, nor nod, nor kneel, nor make a sign,
But I of these will wrest an alphabet,
And by still practice learn to know thy meaning.

BOY. Good grandsire, leave these bitter deep laments:
Make my aunt merry with some pleasing tale.

MARC. Alas, the tender boy, in passion moved,
Doth weep to see his grandsire's heaviness.

TIT. Peace, tender sapling; thou art made of tears,
And tears will quickly melt thy life away.
*[Marcus strikes the dish with a knife.*
What dost thou strike at, Marcus, with thy knife?

MARC. At that that I have kill'd, my lord, — a fly.

TIT. Out on thee, murderer! thou kill'st my heart;
Mine eyes are cloy'd with view of tyranny:
A deed of death done on the innocent

---

36 *her martyr'd signs*] signs of martyrdom, suffering.

38 *mesh'd*] mixed up together, a variant of "mashed" (*i. e.*, pounded together), a technical term in brewing.

39 *complainer*] Capell's correction of the First Folio *complaynet*, for which the later Folios substitute *complaint*, *O.*

45 *still*] constant, continual.

Becomes not Titus' brother: get thee gone;
I see thou art not for my company.
MARC. Alas, my lord, I have but kill'd a fly.
TIT. "But!" How, if that fly had a father and mother?
How would he hang his slender gilded wings,
And buzz lamenting doings in the air!
Poor harmless fly,
That, with his pretty buzzing melody,
Came here to make us merry! and thou hast kill'd him.
MARC. Pardon me, sir; it was a black ill-favour'd fly,
Like to the empress' Moor; therefore I kill'd him.
TIT. O, O, O,
Then pardon me for reprehending thee,
For thou hast done a charitable deed.
Give me thy knife, I will insult on him;
Flattering myself, as if it were the Moor
Come hither purposely to poison me.
There's for thyself, and that's for Tamora.
Ah, sirrah!
Yet, I think, we are not brought so low,
But that between us we can kill a fly
That comes in likeness of a coal-black Moor.
MARC. Alas, poor man! grief has so wrought on him,
He takes false shadows for true substances.

62 *lamenting doings*] tidings of woe. For *doings*, the original reading, *dolings* and *dronings* have both been suggested.
71 *insult on him*] triumph insolently over him.

TIT. Come, take away. Lavinia, go with me:
I'll to thy closet; and go read with thee
Sad stories chanced in the times of old.
Come, boy, and go with me: thy sight is young,
And thou shalt read when mine begin to dazzle.

[*Exeunt.*

## ACT FOURTH — SCENE I — ROME

*TITUS'S GARDEN*

*Enter young* LUCIUS *and* LAVINIA *running after him, and the boy flies from her, with his books under his arm. Then enter* TITUS *and* MARCUS

BOY

ELP, GRANDSIRE, HELP! my aunt Lavinia
Follows me every where, I know not why:
Good uncle Marcus, see how swift she comes.
Alas, sweet aunt, I know not what you mean.

MARC. Stand by me, Lucius; do not fear thine aunt.

TIT. She loves thee, boy, too well to do thee harm.

BOY. Ay, when my father was in Rome she did.

MARC. What means my niece Lavinia by these signs?

TIT. Fear her not, Lucius: somewhat doth she mean:

See, Lucius, see how much she makes of thee:
Somewhither would she have thee go with her.
Ah, boy, Cornelia never with more care
Read to her sons than she hath read to thee
Sweet poetry and Tully's Orator.

MARC. Canst thou not guess wherefore she plies thee thus?

BOY. My lord, I know not, I, nor can I guess,
Unless some fit or frenzy do possess her:
For I have heard my grandsire say full oft,
Extremity of griefs would make men mad;
And I have read that Hecuba of Troy
Ran mad for sorrow: that made me to fear;
Although, my lord, I know my noble aunt
Loves me as dear as e'er my mother did,
And would not, but in fury, fright my youth:
Which made me down to throw my books and fly,
Causeless perhaps. But pardon me, sweet aunt:
And, madam, if my uncle Marcus go,
I will most willingly attend your ladyship.

MARC. Lucius, I will. [*Lavinia turns over with her stumps the books which Lucius has let fall.*

12 *Cornelia*] The courageous mother of the Gracchi.

14 *Tully's Orator*] One of Cicero's two treatises on oratory was called *Orator*. The second more famous treatise was called *De Oratore*.

15 *Canst . . . thus?*] This line in the original editions concludes Titus' speech. Capell first transferred it to Marcus.

20–21 *Hecuba . . . sorrow*] Reference has already been made to the story of Hecuba's grief, I, i, 136, *supra*. Cf. *Cymb.*, IV, ii, 314: "All curses *madded Hecuba* gave the Greeks."

24 *fury*] fury of madness.

TIT. How now, Lavinia! Marcus, what means this?
Some book there is that she desires to see.
Which is it, girl, of these? Open them, boy.
But thou art deeper read, and better skill'd:
Come, and take choice of all my library,
And so beguile thy sorrow, till the heavens
Reveal the damn'd contriver of this deed.
Why lifts she up her arms in sequence thus?
MARC. I think she means that there were more than one
Confederate in the fact; ay, more there was;
Or else to heaven she heaves them for revenge.
TIT. Lucius, what book is that she tosseth so?
BOY. Grandsire, 't is Ovid's Metamorphoses:
My mother gave it me.
MARC. For love of her that's gone,
Perhaps she cull'd it from among the rest.
TIT. Soft! so busily she turns the leaves!
Help her:
What would she find? Lavinia, shall I read?
This is the tragic tale of Philomel,
And treats of Tereus' treason and his rape;
And rape, I fear, was root of thine annoy.

36 *Reveal . . . deed*] After *deed* the Folios insert as a separate line *What booke?*
41 *tosseth*] turns over (the leaves of).
42 *Ovid's Metamorphoses*] the most popular of Ovid's works. It was a text-book in Elizabethan schools, and was widely read in Golding's translation, of which seven editions were issued between 1565 and 1597.
48–49 *This is . . . rape*] See note on II, iii, 43, *supra*.
50 *annoy*] suffering.

MARC. See, brother, see; note how she quotes the leaves.

TIT. Lavinia, wert thou thus surprised, sweet girl,
Ravish'd and wrong'd, as Philomela was,
Forced in the ruthless, vast, and gloomy woods?
See, see!
Ay, such a place there is, where we did hunt, —
O, had we never, never hunted there! —
Pattern'd by that the poet here describes,
By nature made for murders and for rapes.

MARC. O, why should nature build so foul a den,
Unless the gods delight in tragedies?

TIT. Give signs, sweet girl, for here are none but friends,
What Roman lord it was durst do the deed:
Or slunk not Saturnine, as Tarquin erst,
That left the camp to sin in Lucrece' bed?

MARC. Sit down, sweet niece: brother, sit down by me.
Apollo, Pallas, Jove, or Mercury,
Inspire me, that I may this treason find!
My lord, look here: look here, Lavinia:
This sandy plot is plain; guide, if thou canst,
This after me. [*He writes his name with his staff, and guides it with feet and mouth.*] I have writ my name
Without the help of any hand at all.
Cursed be that heart that forced us to this shift!
Write thou, good niece; and here display at last

---

51 *quotes*] observes, marks.

70 *This sandy . . . plain*] This sandy plot of earth is level.

What God will have discovered for revenge:
Heaven guide thy pen to print thy sorrows plain,
That we may know the traitors and the truth!

*[She takes the staff in her mouth, and guides it with her stumps, and writes.*

TIT. O, do ye read, my lord, what she hath writ?
"Stuprum. Chiron. Demetrius."

MARC. What, what! the lustful sons of Tamora
Performers of this heinous, bloody deed?

TIT. Magni Dominator poli,
Tam lentus audis scelera? tam lentus vides?

MARC. O, calm thee, gentle lord; although I know
There is enough written upon this earth
To stir a mutiny in the mildest thoughts,
And arm the minds of infants to exclaims.
My lord, kneel down with me; Lavinia, kneel;
And kneel, sweet boy, the Roman Hector's hope;
And swear with me, as, with the woful fere
And father of that chaste dishonour'd dame,
Lord Junius Brutus sware for Lucrece' rape,

79 *Stuprum*] Latin for "violation."

82–83 *Magni . . . vides?*] These lines are obviously drawn from Seneca's *Hippolytus*, 671–672: "Magne regnator deum, Tam lentus audis scelera? tam lentus uides?" ("Great ruler of the gods, dost thou hear crimes thus complacently? dost thou witness them with calmness?")

89 *Roman Hector's hope*] The Trojan Hector's son was Astyanax.

90 *fere*] companion; here "husband." The Fourth Folio wrongly substituted *Peer*. Shakespeare, in his poem of *Lucrece*, lines 1849–1850, describes the vow of vengeance taken by the outraged heroine's father, Lucretius; Lucretia's husband, Collatinus; and her husband's friend, Junius Brutus.

That we will prosecute by good advice
Mortal revenge upon these traitorous Goths,
And see their blood, or die with this reproach.

TIT. 'T is sure enough, an you knew how.
But if you hunt these bear-whelps, then beware:
The dam will wake; and if she wind you once,
She's with the lion deeply still in league,
And lulls him whilst she playeth on her back,
And when he sleeps will she do what she list.
You are a young huntsman, Marcus; let alone;
And, come, I will go get a leaf of brass,
And with a gad of steel will write these words,
And lay it by: the angry northern wind
Will blow these sands, like Sibyl's leaves, abroad,
And where's your lesson then? Boy, what say you?

BOY. I say, my lord, that if I were a man,
Their mother's bed-chamber should not be safe
For these bad bondmen to the yoke of Rome.

MARC. Ay, that's my boy! thy father hath full oft
For his ungrateful country done the like.

93 *by good advice*] deliberately.

96 *'T is sure . . . knew how*] A short line, which Collier proposed to complete by adding the words *to do it.*

104 *gad*] piercing instrument, sharp point.

106 *like Sibyl's leaves*] A reminiscence of Virgil's *Æneid*, vi, 74–75, where Æneas addresses the Sibyl of Cumæ thus: "foliis tantum *ne carmina manda, Ne turbata volent rapidis ludibria ventis*" ("only do not entrust your prophecies to leaves, lest they fly abroad, the sport of the swift winds").

110 *bad*] The First Quarto (1594) reads *base.*
*bondmen to the yoke of Rome*] Rome's prisoners of war, and thus of the status of slaves.

BOY. And, uncle, so will I, an if I live.
TIT. Come, go with me into mine armoury;
Lucius, I'll fit thee, and withal, my boy
Shall carry from me to the empress' sons
Presents that I intend to send them both:
Come, come; thou'lt do thy message, wilt thou not?
BOY. Ay, with my dagger in their bosoms, grandsire.
TIT. No, boy, not so; I'll teach thee another course.
Lavinia, come. Marcus, look to my house:
Lucius and I'll go brave it at the court;
Ay, marry, will we, sir; and we'll be waited on.
[*Exeunt Titus, Lavinia, and young Lucius.*
MARC. O heavens, can you hear a good man groan,
And not relent, or not compassion him?
Marcus, attend him in his ecstasy,
That hath more scars of sorrow in his heart
Than foemen's marks upon his batter'd shield,
But yet so just that he will not revenge.
Revenge, ye heavens, for old Andronicus! [*Exit.*

118 *thy*] The First Quarto (1594) reads *my*, which Rowe adopted by an accidental coincidence.
125 *compassion*] pity.
126 *ecstasy*] fit of madness, frenzy. Cf. IV, iv, 21, *infra*.
130 *Revenge, ye heavens*] Johnson's emendation of the original reading, "*Revenge the heavens.*"

## SCENE II — THE SAME

### *A ROOM IN THE PALACE*

*Enter* AARON, CHIRON, *and* DEMETRIUS *at one door; and at another door, young* LUCIUS, *and an* Attendant, *with a bundle of weapons and verses writ upon them*

CHI. Demetrius, here's the son of Lucius;
He hath some message to deliver us.
AAR. Ay, some mad message from his mad grandfather.
BOY. My lords, with all the humbleness I may,
I greet your honours from Andronicus.
[*Aside*] And pray the Roman gods confound you both!
DEM. Gramercy, lovely Lucius: what's the news?
BOY. [*Aside*] That you are both decipher'd, that's the news,
For villains mark'd with rape. — May it please you,
My grandsire, well advised, hath sent by me
The goodliest weapons of his armoury
To gratify your honourable youth,
The hope of Rome; for so he bid me say;
And so I do, and with his gifts present
Your lordships, that, whenever you have need,
You may be armed and appointed well:
And so I leave you both, [*Aside*] like bloody villains.
[*Exeunt Boy and Attendant.*

16 *appointed*] equipped.

DEM. What's here? A scroll, and written round about!
Let's see:
"Integer vitæ, scelerisque purus,
Non eget Mauri jaculis, nec arcu."

CHI. O, 't is a verse in Horace; I know it well:
I read it in the grammar long ago.

AAR. Ay, just; a verse in Horace; right, you have it.
[*Aside*] Now, what a thing it is to be an ass!
Here's no sound jest: the old man hath found their guilt,
And sends them weapons wrapp'd about with lines,
That wound, beyond their feeling, to the quick.
But were our witty empress well afoot,
She would applaud Andronicus' conceit:
But let her rest in her unrest awhile. —
And now, young lords, was 't not a happy star
Led us to Rome, strangers, and more than so,

20–21 "*Integer . . . nec arcu*"] the first two lines of Horace's well-known ode, Bk. I, no. xxii. "The man of spotless life and free from guilt needs no Moorish javelins or bow" (to protect him). The accepted Latin text gives *Mauris* instead of *Mauri* in the second line. *Arcu*, the correct reading, is found in the First Quarto (1594), but is wrongly changed to *arcus* in the later Quartos and the First Folio.

23 *the grammar*] Lily's *Grammar*, a book in common use in Elizabethan grammar schools.

26 *Here's no sound jest*] This is no safe jest. This is a perilous jest.

28 *beyond their feeling*] without their perceiving it.

29 *witty*] clever.
*well afoot*] well recovered from childbed.

31 *let her rest in her unrest*] Cf. *Rich. III*, IV, iv, 29: "*Rest thy unrest* on England's lawful earth."

Captives, to be advanced to this height?
It did me good, before the palace gate
To brave the tribune in his brother's hearing.
DEM. But me more good, to see so great a lord
Basely insinuate and send us gifts.
AAR. Had he not reason, Lord Demetrius?
Did you not use his daughter very friendly?
DEM. I would we had a thousand Roman dames
At such a bay, by turn to serve our lust.
CHI. A charitable wish and full of love.
AAR. Here lacks but your mother for to say amen.
CHI. And that would she for twenty thousand more.
DEM. Come, let us go, and pray to all the gods
For our beloved mother in her pains.
AAR. [*Aside*] Pray to the devils; the gods have given us over. [*Trumpets sound within.*
DEM. Why do the emperor's trumpets flourish thus?
CHI. Belike, for joy the emperor hath a son.
DEM. Soft! who comes here?

*Enter* Nurse, *with a blackamoor* Child

NUR. Good morrow, lords:
O, tell me, did you see Aaron the Moor?
AAR. Well, more or less, or ne'er a whit at all,
Here Aaron is; and what with Aaron now?

---

38 *Basely insinuate*] Ingratiate himself with us in undignified fashion.

42 *At such a bay*] At such an extremity, within our power. Cf. *Pass. Pilg.*, xi, 13: "Ah, that I had my lady *at this bay*." "To bay" is to bark. The expression is a metaphor from a hunted dog standing and barking when flight is hopeless.

NUR. O gentle Aaron, we are all undone!
Now help, or woe betide thee evermore!
AAR. Why, what a caterwauling dost thou keep!
What dost thou wrap and fumble in thine arms?
NUR. O, that which I would hide from heaven's eye,
Our empress' shame and stately Rome's disgrace!
She is deliver'd, lords, she is deliver'd.
AAR. To whom?
NUR. I mean, she is brought a-bed.
AAR. Well, God give her good rest! What hath he sent her?
NUR. A devil.
AAR. Why, then she is the devil's dam;
A joyful issue.
NUR. A joyless, dismal, black and sorrowful issue:
Here is the babe, as loathsome as a toad
Amongst the fairest breeders of our clime:
The empress sends it thee, thy stamp, thy seal,
And bids thee christen it with thy dagger's point.
AAR. 'Zounds, ye whore! is black so base a hue?
Sweet blowse, you are a beauteous blossom, sure.
DEM. Villain, what hast thou done?
AAR. That which thou canst not undo.
CHI. Thou hast undone our mother.
AAR. Villain, I have done thy mother.
DEM. And therein, hellish dog, thou hast undone her.

68 *breeders*] women (who bear children). Cf. *3 Hen. VI*, II, i, 42: "You love the *breeder* [*i. e.*, the woman] better than the male."
72 *blowse*] blowsy, red-faced wench.
76 *Villain . . . mother*] Thus the Quartos. The Folios omit the line.

Woe to her chance, and damn'd her loathed choice!
Accursed the offspring of so foul a fiend!
CHI. It shall not live.
AAR. It shall not die.
NUR. Aaron, it must; the mother wills it so.
AAR. What, must it, nurse? then let no man but I
Do execution on my flesh and blood.
DEM. I'll broach the tadpole on my rapier's point:
Nurse, give it me; my sword shall soon dispatch it.
AAR. Sooner this sword shall plough thy bowels up.
*[Takes the Child from the Nurse, and draws.*
Stay, murderous villains! will you kill your brother?
Now, by the burning tapers of the sky,
That shone so brightly when this boy was got,
He dies upon my scimitar's sharp point
That touches this my first-born son and heir!
I tell you, younglings, not Enceladus,
With all his threatening band of Typhon's brood,
Nor great Alcides, nor the god of war,
Shall seize this prey out of his father's hands.
What, what, ye sanguine, shallow-hearted boys!
Ye white-limed walls! ye alehouse painted signs!

85 *broach*] spit.

93–95 *Enceladus . . . Typhon . . . Alcides*] giants of classical mythology who warred against the gods. Alcides is Hercules. For Enceladus, cf. Virgil, *Æneid*, III, 578, and Horace, Odes, III, iv, 56. The fame of the giant Typhon was eclipsed by that of another giant named Typhœus, who is mentioned by Virgil in *Æneid*, I, 665, and IX, 716, and by Ovid in *Metamorphoses*, V, 321. Golding, in his translation of Ovid, renders the name "Typhœus" by "Typhon."

97 *sanguine*] red-complexioned.

98 *white-limed*] whitewashed. The Quartos and the first two Folios read

Coal-black is better than another hue,
In that it scorns to bear another hue;
For all the water in the ocean
Can never turn the swan's black legs to white,
Although she lave them hourly in the flood.
Tell the empress from me, I am of age
To keep mine own, excuse it how she can.
DEM. Wilt thou betray thy noble mistress thus?
AAR. My mistress is my mistress, this myself,
The vigour and the picture of my youth:
This before all the world do I prefer;
This maugre all the world will I keep safe,
Or some of you shall smoke for it in Rome.
DEM. By this our mother is for ever shamed.
CHI. Rome will despise her for this foul escape.
NUR. The emperor in his rage will doom her death.
CHI. I blush to think upon this ignomy.
AAR. Why, there's the privilege your beauty bears:
Fie, treacherous hue, that will betray with blushing
The close enacts and counsels of the heart!
Here's a young lad framed of another leer:
Look, how the black slave smiles upon the father,
As who should say "Old lad, I am thine own."

---

*white-limbed*, for which the Third and Fourth Folios substitute *white-lim'd*. Malone, probably correctly, interpreted *white-limb'd* as an error for *white-limn'd*.

113 *foul escape*] escapade, transgression.

115 *ignomy*] a common contraction of "ignominy." Thus the Quartos; for which the Folios substitute the longer form of the word.

118 *enacts*] enactments, resolutions.

119 *leer*] complexion.

He is your brother, lords, sensibly fed
Of that self-blood that first gave life to you;
And from that womb where you imprison'd were
He is enfranchised and come to light:
Nay, he is your brother by the surer side,
Although my seal be stamped in his face.

NUR. Aaron, what shall I say unto the empress?

DEM. Advise thee, Aaron, what is to be done,
And we will all subscribe to thy advice:
Save thou the child, so we may all be safe.

AAR. Then sit we down, and let us all consult.
My son and I will have the wind of you:
Keep there: now talk at pleasure of your safety.

[*They sit.*

DEM. How many women saw this child of his?

AAR. Why, so, brave lords! when we join in league,
I am a lamb: but if you brave the Moor,
The chafed boar, the mountain lioness,
The ocean swells not so as Aaron storms.
But say, again, how many saw the child?

NUR. Cornelia the midwife and myself;
And no one else but the deliver'd empress.

AAR. The empress, the midwife, and yourself:
Two may keep counsel when the third 's away:
Go to the empress, tell her this I said.

[*He kills the Nurse.*

---

133 *have the wind of you*] keep the advantage of you; an archer's expression when contriving to shoot with the wind at his back, and in his opponent's face. Cf. IV, iii, 57, *infra:* "to shoot against the wind."

144 *Two . . . away*] a common proverb. Cf. *Rom. and Juliet*, II, iv, 191: "Two may keep counsel, putting one away."

Weke, weke!
So cries a pig prepared to the spit.

DEM. What mean'st thou, Aaron? wherefore didst thou this?

AAR. O Lord, sir, 't is a deed of policy:
Shall she live to betray this guilt of ours,
A long-tongued babbling gossip? no, lords, no:
And now be it known to you my full intent.
Not far, one Muliteus, my countryman,
His wife but yesternight was brought to bed;
His child is like to her, fair as you are:
Go pack with him, and give the mother gold,
And tell them both the circumstance of all;
And how by this their child shall be advanced,
And be received for the emperor's heir,
And substituted in the place of mine,
To calm this tempest whirling in the court;
And let the emperor dandle him for his own.
Hark ye, lords; you see I have given her physic,
[*Pointing to the Nurse.*
And you must needs bestow her funeral;
The fields are near, and you are gallant grooms:
This done, see that you take no longer days,
But send the midwife presently to me.

153 *Not far, one Muliteus*] Thus all the old editions. The line is metrically and grammatically irregular. For *Muliteus* Steevens substituted *Muley lives.*

156 *Go pack*] Go and plot, contrive.

165 *gallant grooms*] strong fellows.

166 *take no longer days*] take as short a time as possible.

The midwife and the nurse well made away,
Then let the ladies tattle what they please.
CHI. Aaron, I see thou wilt not trust the air
With secrets.
DEM. For this care of Tamora,
Herself and hers are highly bound to thee.
[*Exeunt Dem. and Chi. bearing off the Nurse's body.*
AAR. Now to the Goths, as swift as swallow flies;
There to dispose this treasure in mine arms,
And secretly to greet the empress' friends.
Come on, you thick-lipp'd slave, I'll bear you hence;
For it is you that puts us to our shifts:
I'll make you feed on berries and on roots,
And feed on curds and whey, and suck the goat,
And cabin in a cave, and bring you up
To be a warrior and command a camp. [*Exit.*

## SCENE III — THE SAME

*A PUBLIC PLACE*

*Enter* TITUS, *bearing arrows with letters at the ends of them; with him,* MARCUS, *young* LUCIUS, *and other* Gentlemen (PUBLIUS, SEMPRONIUS, *and* CAIUS), *with bows*

TIT. Come, Marcus, come; kinsmen, this is the way.
Sir boy, let me see your archery;
Look ye draw home enough, and 't is there straight.

177 *puts us to our shifts*] drives us to cunning schemes.
179 *feed*] This word seems repeated from the former line in error. Hanmer substituted *feast* here.
3 *draw home*] shoot with force.

Terras Astræa reliquit:
Be you remember'd, Marcus, she's gone, she's fled.
Sirs, take you to your tools. You, cousins, shall
Go sound the ocean, and cast your nets;
Happily you may catch her in the sea;
Yet there's as little justice as at land:
No; Publius and Sempronius, you must do it;
'T is you must dig with mattock and with spade,
And pierce the inmost centre of the earth:
Then, when you come to Pluto's region,
I pray you, deliver him this petition;
Tell him, it is for justice and for aid,
And that it comes from old Andronicus,
Shaken with sorrows in ungrateful Rome.
Ah, Rome! Well, well; I made thee miserable
What time I threw the people's suffrages
On him that thus doth tyrannize o'er me.
Go get you gone; and pray be careful all,
And leave you not a man-of-war unsearch'd:
This wicked emperor may have shipp'd her hence;
And, kinsmen, then we may go pipe for justice.

MARC. O Publius, is not this a heavy case,
To see thy noble uncle thus distract?

---

4 *Terras Astræa reliquit*] From Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, I, 149, 150: "Victa iacet pietas, et uirgo cæde madentes Ultima cælestum *terras Astræa reliquit*" ("Goodness lies conquered, and the virgin Astræa, last of the immortals, has left the slaughter-stained earth"). Astræa was the goddess of justice. The allusion is expanded in lines 39, 40, *infra*. Joan of Arc is called "Astræa's daughter" in *1 Hen. VI*, I, vi, 4.

8 *Happily*] Haply, perhaps.

24 *go pipe*] go whistle.

PUB. Therefore, my lord, it highly us concerns
By day and night to attend him carefully,
And feed his humour kindly as we may,
Till time beget some careful remedy.
MARC. Kinsmen, his sorrows are past remedy.
Join with the Goths, and with revengeful war
Take wreak on Rome for this ingratitude,
And vengeance on the traitor Saturnine.
TIT. Publius, how now! how now, my masters!
What, have you met with her?
PUB. No, my good lord; but Pluto sends you word,
If you will have Revenge from Hell, you shall:
Marry, for Justice, she is so employ'd,
He thinks, with Jove in heaven, or somewhere else,
So that perforce you must needs stay a time.
TIT. He doth me wrong to feed me with delays.
I'll dive into the burning lake below,
And pull her out of Acheron by the heels.
Marcus, we are but shrubs, no cedars we,
No big-boned men framed of the Cyclops' size;
But metal, Marcus, steel to the very back,
Yet wrung with wrongs more than our backs can bear:
And sith there's no justice in earth nor hell,
We will solicit heaven, and move the gods

30 *careful*] possibly "provident," "efficient." But the suggested emendation *cureful* deserves attention.

33 *wreak*] vengeance. Cf. IV, iv, 11, V, ii, 32, *infra:* "his *wreaks,*" and *Cor.*, IV, v, 85: "A heart of *wreak.*" At line 51, *infra*, "*to wreak*" is used for "to avenge."

44 *Acheron*] properly a river of Hades. See II, iii, 236, *supra*, and *Mids. N. Dr.*, III, ii, 357, and note.

To send down Justice for to wreak our wrongs.
Come, to this gear. You are a good archer, Marcus;
[*He gives them the arrows.*
"Ad Jovem," that's for you: here, "Ad Apollinem:"
"Ad Martem," that's for myself:
Here, boy, to Pallas: here, to Mercury:
To Saturn, Caius, not to Saturnine;
You were as good to shoot against the wind.
To it, boy! Marcus, loose when I bid.
Of my word, I have written to effect;
There's not a god left unsolicited.
MARC. Kinsmen, shoot all your shafts into the court:
We will afflict the emperor in his pride.
TIT. Now, masters, draw. [*They shoot.*] O, well said, Lucius!
Good boy, in Virgo's lap; give it Pallas.
MARC. My lord, I aim a mile beyond the moon;
Your letter is with Jupiter by this.
TIT. Ha, ha!
Publius, Publius, what hast thou done?
See, see, thou hast shot off one of Taurus' horns.

---

52 *this gear*] the business.

56 *Caius*] The early editions read *to Caius*. But Caius is clearly one of Titus' kinsmen, whom he is addressing. Cf. V, ii, 151, *infra*, where Titus says, "Publius, come hither, *Caius*, and Valentine."

57 *to shoot against the wind*] Cf. IV, ii, 133, *supra*.

63 *well said*] well done; a common usage.

64 *in Virgo's lap*] as far as the constellation Virgo. Cf. Taurus (line 69) and Aries (line 71), names of other signs of the zodiac.

65 *a mile beyond the moon*] out of reach or range.

MARC. This was the sport, my lord: when Publius shot,
The Bull, being gall'd, gave Aries such a knock
That down fell both the Ram's horns in the court;
And who should find them but the empress' villain?
She laugh'd, and told the Moor he should not choose
But give them to his master for a present.

TIT. Why, there it goes: God give his lordship joy!

*Enter a* Clown, *with a basket, and two pigeons in it*

News, news from heaven! Marcus, the post is come.
Sirrah, what tidings? have you any letters?
Shall I have justice? what says Jupiter?

CLO. O, the gibbet-maker! he says that he hath taken them down again, for the man must not be hanged till the next week.

TIT. But what says Jupiter, I ask thee?

CLO. Alas, sir, I know not Jupiter; I never drank with him in all my life.

TIT. Why, villain, art not thou the carrier?

CLO. Ay, of my pigeons, sir; nothing else.

TIT. Why, didst thou not come from heaven?

CLO. From heaven! alas, sir, I never came there: God forbid I should be so bold to press to heaven in my young days. Why, I am going with my pigeons to the tribunal plebs, to take up a matter of brawl betwixt my uncle and one of the emperial's men.

MARC. Why, sir, that is as fit as can be to serve for

92 *tribunal plebs*] an ignorant mispronunciation of "tribunus plebis."
*take up*] make up, settle.

your oration; and let him deliver the pigeons to the emperor from you.

TIT. Tell me, can you deliver an oration to the emperor with a grace?

CLO. Nay, truly, sir, I could never say grace in all my life.

TIT. Sirrah, come hither: make no more ado,
But give your pigeons to the emperor:
By me thou shalt have justice at his hands.
Hold, hold; meanwhile here's money for thy charges.
Give me pen and ink.
Sirrah, can you with a grace deliver a supplication?

CLO. Ay, sir.

TIT. Then here is a supplication for you. And when you come to him, at the first approach you must kneel; then kiss his foot; then deliver up your pigeons; and then look for your reward. I'll be at hand, sir; see you do it bravely.

CLO. I warrant you, sir, let me alone.

TIT. Sirrah, hast thou a knife? come, let me see it.
Here, Marcus, fold it in the oration;
For thou hast made it like an humble suppliant:
And when thou hast given it to the emperor,
Knock at my door, and tell me what he says.

CLO. God be with you, sir; I will. [*Exit.*

TIT. Come, Marcus, let us go. Publius, follow me.

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE IV — THE SAME

### *BEFORE THE PALACE*

*Enter* SATURNINUS, TAMORA, CHIRON, DEMETRIUS, Lords, *and others;* SATURNINUS *with the Arrows in his hand that* TITUS *shot*

SAT. Why, lords, what wrongs are these! was ever seen
An emperor in Rome thus overborne,
Troubled, confronted thus, and for the extent
Of egal justice used in such contempt?
My lords, you know, as know the mightful gods,
However these disturbers of our peace
Buzz in the people's ears, there nought hath pass'd
But even with law against the wilful sons
Of old Andronicus. And what an if
His sorrows have so overwhelm'd his wits,
Shall we be thus afflicted in his wreaks,
His fits, his frenzy and his bitterness?
And now he writes to heaven for his redress:
See, here's to Jove, and this to Mercury;
This to Apollo; this to the god of war:
Sweet scrolls to fly about the streets of Rome!
What's this but libelling against the senate,

3–4 *for the extent Of egal justice*] in consequence of the impartial administration of justice. *Egal* is the reading of the Quartos and the First Folio. The later Folios substitute *equal.*

8 *even with*] in agreement with.

11 *wreaks*] efforts at vengeance. Cf. IV, iii, 33, *supra*, and note.

And blazoning our unjustice every where?
A goodly humour, is it not, my lords?
As who would say, in Rome no justice were.
But if I live, his feigned ecstasies
Shall be no shelter to these outrages:
But he and his shall know that justice lives
In Saturninus' health; whom, if he sleep,
He'll so awake, as he in fury shall
Cut off the proud'st conspirator that lives.
TAM. My gracious lord, my lovely Saturnine,
Lord of my life, commander of my thoughts,
Calm thee, and bear the faults of Titus' age,
The effects of sorrow for his valiant sons,
Whose loss hath pierced him deep and scarr'd his heart;
And rather comfort his distressed plight
Than prosecute the meanest or the best
For these contempts. [*Aside*] Why, thus it shall become
High-witted Tamora to gloze with all:
But, Titus, I have touch'd thee to the quick,
Thy life-blood out: if Aaron now be wise,
Then is all safe, the anchor in the port.

*Enter* Clown

How now, good fellow! wouldst thou speak with us?
CLO. Yea, forsooth, an your mistership be emperial.
TAM. Empress I am, but yonder sits the emperor.

21 *ecstasies*] fits of frenzy. Cf. IV, i, 126, *supra*.
35 *gloze with*] wheedle, cajole; like *smooth* in line 96.
37 *Thy life-blood out*] So that thy life-blood is drawn.

CLO. 'T is he. God and Saint Stephen give you godden: I have brought you a letter and a couple of pigeons here. [*Saturninus reads the letter.*

SAT. Go, take him away, and hang him presently.

CLO. How much money must I have?

TAM. Come, sirrah, you must be hanged.

CLO. Hanged! by 'r lady, then I have brought up a neck to a fair end. [*Exit, guarded.*

SAT. Despiteful and intolerable wrongs! 50
Shall I endure this monstrous villany?
I know from whence this same device proceeds:
May this be borne? As if his traitorous sons,
That died by law for murder of our brother,
Have by my means been butcher'd wrongfully!
Go, drag the villain hither by the hair;
Nor age nor honour shall shape privilege:
For this proud mock I'll be thy slaughter-man;
Sly frantic wretch, that holp'st to make me great,
In hope thyself should govern Rome and me. 60

*Enter* ÆMILIUS

What news with thee, Æmilius?

ÆMIL. Arm, my lords; Rome never had more cause.
The Goths have gather'd head, and with a power
Of high-resolved men, bent to the spoil,
They hither march amain, under conduct
Of Lucius, son to old Andronicus;
Who threats, in course of this revenge, to do
As much as ever Coriolanus did.

63 *gather'd head*] collected an army.

SAT. Is warlike Lucius general of the Goths?
These tidings nip me, and I hang the head
As flowers with frost or grass beat down with storms:
Ay, now begin our sorrows to approach:
'T is he the common people love so much;
Myself hath often heard them say,
When I have walked like a private man,
That Lucius' banishment was wrongfully,
And they have wish'd that Lucius were their emperor.
TAM. Why should you fear? is not your city strong?
SAT. Ay, but the citizens favour Lucius,
And will revolt from me to succour him.
TAM. King, be thy thoughts imperious, like thy name.
Is the sun dimm'd, that gnats do fly in it?
The eagle suffers little birds to sing,
And is not careful what they mean thereby,
Knowing that with the shadow of his wings
He can at pleasure stint their melody:
Even so mayst thou the giddy men of Rome.
Then cheer thy spirit: for know, thou emperor,
I will enchant the old Andronicus
With words more sweet, and yet more dangerous,
Than baits to fish, or honey-stalks to sheep;
Whenas the one is wounded with the bait,
The other rotted with delicious feed.
SAT. But he will not entreat his son for us.
TAM. If Tamora entreat him, then he will:

82–86 *Is the sun dimm'd . . . melody*] These beautiful lines have incontestably the Shakespearean ring.

86 *stint*] stop.

91 *honey-stalks*] sweet-clover flower, which eaten to excess kills cattle.

For I can smooth, and fill his aged ears
With golden promises; that, were his heart
Almost impregnable, his old ears deaf,
Yet should both ear and heart obey my tongue.
[*To Æmilius*] Go thou before, be our ambassador:
Say that the emperor requests a parley
Of warlike Lucius, and appoint the meeting
Even at his father's house, the old Andronicus.
SAT. Æmilius, do this message honourably:
And if he stand on hostage for his safety,
Bid him demand what pledge will please him best.
ÆMIL. Your bidding shall I do effectually. [*Exit.*
TAM. Now will I to that old Andronicus,
And temper him with all the art I have,
To pluck proud Lucius from the warlike Goths.
And now, sweet emperor, be blithe again,
And bury all thy fear in my devices.
SAT. Then go successantly, and plead to him.
[*Exeunt.*

96 *smooth*] wheedle, cajole. Cf. V, ii, 140, and "gloze," line 35, *supra.*
113 *successantly*] a word unknown elsewhere. It may be an error for *successfully*, or may be formed from an invented present participle meaning "following after."

## ACT FIFTH — SCENE I

*PLAINS NEAR ROME*

*Flourish. Enter* Lucius *and* Goths, *with drum and colours*

Lucius

PPROVED WARRIORS, AND my faithful friends,
I have received letters from great Rome,
Which signify what hate they bear their emperor,
And how desirous of our sight they are.
Therefore, great lords, be, as your titles witness,
Imperious, and impatient of your wrongs;
And wherein Rome hath done you any scath,
Let him make treble satisfaction.

First Goth. Brave slip, sprung from the great Andronicus,

7 *scath*] injury.

Whose name was once our terror, now our comfort;
Whose high exploits and honourable deeds
Ingrateful Rome requites with foul contempt,
Be bold in us: we'll follow where thou lead'st,
Like stinging bees in hottest summer's day,
Led by their master to the flowered fields,
And be avenged on cursed Tamora.

ALL THE GOTHS. And as he saith, so say we all with him.

LUC. I humbly thank him, and I thank you all.
But who comes here, led by a lusty Goth?

*Enter a* Goth, *leading* AARON *with his Child in his arms*

SEC. GOTH. Renowned Lucius, from our troops I stray'd
To gaze upon a ruinous monastery;
And, as I earnestly did fix mine eye
Upon the wasted building, suddenly
I heard a child cry underneath a wall.
I made unto the noise; when soon I heard
The crying babe controll'd with this discourse:
"Peace, tawny slave, half me and half thy dam!
Did not thy hue bewray whose brat thou art,
Had nature lent thee but thy mother's look,
Villain, thou mightst have been an emperor:
But where the bull and cow are both milk-white,

13 *Be bold in us*] Have confidence in us.

20 SEC. GOTH. *Renowned Lucius*] Pope here begins a new scene (Scene ii).

21 *ruinous monastery*] These words, like "popish tricks" (line 76, *infra*), are curious anachronisms, considering the historical date of the play's action.

They never do beget a coal-black calf.
Peace, villain, peace!" — even thus he rates the babe —
"For I must bear thee to a trusty Goth;
Who, when he knows thou art the empress' babe,
Will hold thee dearly for thy mother's sake."
With this, my weapon drawn, I rush'd upon him,
Surprised him suddenly, and brought him hither,
To use as you think needful of the man.

LUC. O worthy Goth, this is the incarnate devil
That robb'd Andronicus of his good hand;
This is the pearl that pleased your empress' eye;
And here's the base fruit of his burning lust.
Say, wall-eyed slave, whither wouldst thou convey
This growing image of thy fiend-like face?
Why dost not speak? what, deaf? not a word?
A halter, soldiers! hang him on this tree,
And by his side his fruit of bastardy.

AAR. Touch not the boy; he is of royal blood.

LUC. Too like the sire for ever being good.
First hang the child, that he may see it sprawl;
A sight to vex the father's soul withal.
Get me a ladder.

[*A ladder brought, which Aaron is made to ascend.*

AAR. Lucius, save the child,

---

33 *villain*] a term of endearment. Cf. Leontes' address to his son Mamilius, *Wint. Tale*, I, ii, 136: "sweet *villain*."

42 *This is the pearl . . . eye*] a proverbial phrase. Cf. *Two Gent.*, V, ii, 12: "Black men are *pearls* in beauteous ladies' eyes."

44 *wall-eyed*] fierce-eyed. Cf. *K. John*, IV, iii, 49: "*wall-eyed* wrath." "Wall" is apparently derived from "whall," a name of the disease glaucoma, which greatly enlarges the white of the eye.

And bear it from me to the empress.
If thou do this, I'll show thee wondrous things,
That highly may advantage thee to hear:
If thou wilt not, befall what may befall,
I'll speak no more but "Vengeance rot you all!"
LUC. Say on: an if it please me which thou speak'st,
Thy child shall live, and I will see it nourish'd.
AAR. An if it please thee! why, assure thee, Lucius,
'T will vex thy soul to hear what I shall speak;
For I must talk of murders, rapes and massacres,
Acts of black night, abominable deeds,
Complots of mischief, treason, villanies
Ruthful to hear, yet piteously perform'd:
And this shall all be buried in my death,
Unless thou swear to me my child shall live.
LUC. Tell on thy mind; I say thy child shall live.
AAR. Swear that he shall, and then I will begin.
LUC. Who should I swear by? thou believest no god:
That granted, how canst thou believe an oath?
AAR. What if I do not? as, indeed, I do not;
Yet, for I know thou art religious,
And hast a thing within thee called conscience,
With twenty popish tricks and ceremonies,
Which I have seen thee careful to observe,
Therefore I urge thy oath; for that I know
An idiot holds his bauble for a god,

66 *piteously perform'd*] done so as to excite pity.
76 *popish tricks*] For a parallel anachronism, see line 21, *supra*.
79 *bauble*] the toy-stick surmounted by a doll's head, ordinarily carried by the professional fool.

And keeps the oath which by that god he swears,
To that I'll urge him: therefore thou shalt vow
By that same god, what god soe'er it be,
That thou adorest and hast in reverence,
To save my boy, to nourish and bring him up;
Or else I will discover nought to thee.
LUC. Even by my god I swear to thee I will.
AAR. First know thou, I begot him on the empress.
LUC. O most insatiate, and luxurious woman!
AAR. Tut, Lucius, this was but a deed of charity
To that which thou shalt hear of me anon.
'T was her two sons that murder'd Bassianus;
They cut thy sister's tongue, and ravish'd her,
And cut her hands, and trimm'd her as thou saw'st.
LUC. O detestable villain! call'st thou that trimming?
AAR. Why, she was wash'd and cut and trimm'd, and 't was
Trim sport for them that had the doing of it.
LUC. O barbarous, beastly villains, like thyself!
AAR. Indeed, I was their tutor to instruct them:
That codding spirit had they from their mother,
As sure a card as ever won the set;
That bloody mind, I think, they learn'd of me,
As true a dog as ever fought at head.
Well, let my deeds be witness of my worth.

88 *luxurious*] lustful.
99 *codding*] lecherous.
102 *a dog . . . head*] a mastiff or bull-dog, which when fighting a bull or bear was wont to rush at its head and seize its nose.

I train'd thy brethren to that guileful hole,
Where the dead corpse of Bassianus lay:
I wrote the letter that thy father found,
And hid the gold within the letter mention'd,
Confederate with the queen and her two sons:
And what not done, that thou hast cause to rue,
Wherein I had no stroke of mischief in it?
I play'd the cheater for thy father's hand;
And, when I had it, drew myself apart,
And almost broke my heart with extreme laughter:
I pried me through the crevice of a wall
When for his hand he had his two sons' heads;
Beheld his tears and laugh'd so heartily,
That both mine eyes were rainy like to his:
And when I told the empress of this sport,
She swounded almost at my pleasing tale,
And for my tidings gave me twenty kisses.

FIRST GOTH. What, canst thou say all this, and never blush?

AAR. Ay, like a black dog, as the saying is.

LUC. Art thou not sorry for these heinous deeds?

AAR. Ay, that I had not done a thousand more.

---

104 *train'd*] drew, enticed.

119 *swounded*] an old form of "swooned." The Quartos and the first two Folios read here *sounded*, another old form of the word. The Third and Fourth Folios read *swooned*.

122 *Ay, like a black dog . . . is*] To blush like a black dog is an old proverb, meaning that one has a brazen face, one cannot blush at all.

124–144 *Ay, that . . . ten thousand more*] This speech closely follows the lines of the Jew Barabas' confession of crime in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, Act II, Sc. ii.

Even now I curse the day — and yet, I think,
Few come within the compass of my curse —
Wherein I did not some notorious ill:
As kill a man, or else devise his death;
Ravish a maid, or plot the way to do it;
Accuse some innocent, and forswear myself;
Set deadly enmity between two friends;
Make poor men's cattle break their necks;
Set fire on barns and hay-stacks in the night,
And bid the owners quench them with their tears.
Oft have I digg'd up dead men from their graves,
And set them upright at their dear friends' doors,
Even when their sorrows almost were forgot;
And on their skins, as on the bark of trees,
Have with my knife carved in Roman letters
"Let not your sorrow die, though I am dead."
Tut, I have done a thousand dreadful things
As willingly as one would kill a fly;
And nothing grieves me heartily indeed,
But that I cannot do ten thousand more.

LUC. Bring down the devil; for he must not die
So sweet a death as hanging presently.

AAR. If there be devils, would I were a devil,
To live and burn in everlasting fire,
So I might have your company in hell,
But to torment you with my bitter tongue!

LUC. Sirs, stop his mouth, and let him speak no more.

132 *Make . . . break their necks*] This line is metrically defective. Malone added at the end *and die.*

145 *Bring down the devil*] Bring Aaron down from the ladder; cf. l. 53, *supra.*

*Enter a* Goth

THIRD GOTH. My lord, there is a messenger from Rome
Desires to be admitted to your presence.
LUC. Let him come near.

*Enter* ÆMILIUS

Welcome, Æmilius: what's the news from Rome?
ÆMIL. Lord Lucius, and you princes of the Goths,
The Roman emperor greets you all by me;
And, for he understands you are in arms,
He craves a parley at your father's house,
Willing you to demand your hostages,
And they shall be immediately deliver'd.
FIRST GOTH. What says our general?
LUC. Æmilius, let the emperor give his pledges
Unto my father and my uncle Marcus,
And we will come. March away. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

## SCENE II — ROME

### *BEFORE TITUS'S HOUSE*

*Enter* TAMORA, DEMETRIUS, *and* CHIRON, *disguised*

TAM. Thus, in this strange and sad habiliment,
I will encounter with Andronicus,
And say I am Revenge, sent from below
To join with him and right his heinous wrongs.
Knock at his study, where, they say, he keeps,

---

SCENE II] Pope numbers this Scene iii.
5 *keeps*] resides.

To ruminate strange plots of dire revenge;
Tell him Revenge is come to join with him,
And work confusion on his enemies. [*Knock.*

*Enter* TITUS, *above*

TIT. Who doth molest my contemplation?
Is it your trick to make me ope the door,
That so my sad decrees may fly away,
And all my study be to no effect?
You are deceived: for what I mean to do
See here in bloody lines I have set down;
And what is written shall be executed.
TAM. Titus, I am come to talk with thee.
TIT. No, not a word: how can I grace my talk,
Wanting a hand to give it action?
Thou hast the odds of me; therefore no more.
TAM. If thou didst know me, thou wouldst talk with me.
TIT. I am not mad; I know thee well enough:
Witness this wretched stump, witness these crimson lines;
Witness these trenches made by grief and care;
Witness the tiring day and heavy night;
Witness all sorrow, that I know thee well
For our proud empress, mighty Tamora:
Is not thy coming for my other hand?
TAM. Know, thou sad man, I am not Tamora;
She is thy enemy, and I thy friend:

8 (stage direction) *Knock. Enter Titus above*] Thus the Cambridge edition, following substantially Rowe. The Quartos and Folios give *They knocke and Titus opens his studie doore.* By *above* is meant the balcony at the back of the stage. Cf. *supra*, I, i, 1 (stage direction).

11 *decrees*] resolution.

I am Revenge; sent from the infernal kingdom,
To ease the gnawing vulture of thy mind,
By working wreakful vengeance on thy foes.
Come down and welcome me to this world's light;
Confer with me of murder and of death:
There's not a hollow cave or lurking-place,
No vast obscurity or misty vale,
Where bloody murder or detested rape
Can couch for fear, but I will find them out,
And in their ears tell them my dreadful name,
Revenge, which makes the foul offender quake.

TIT. Art thou Revenge? and art thou sent to me,
To be a torment to mine enemies?

TAM. I am; therefore come down and welcome me.

TIT. Do me some service ere I come to thee.
Lo, by thy side where Rape and Murder stands;
Now give some surance that thou art Revenge,
Stab them, or tear them on thy chariot-wheels;
And then I'll come and be thy waggoner,
And whirl along with thee about the globes.
Provide thee two proper palfreys, black as jet,
To hale thy vengeful waggon swift away,
And find out murderers in their guilty caves:
And when thy car is loaden with their heads,
I will dismount, and by the waggon-wheel
Trot like a servile footman all day long,
Even from Hyperion's rising in the east

---

32 *wreakful*] vengeful. Cf. IV, iii, 33, *supra*.

52 *murderers*] Capell's correction of the original reading *murder*.

56 *Hyperion's*] Here the Quartos read quite unintelligibly *Epeons*, and

Until his very downfall in the sea:
And day by day I'll do this heavy task,
So thou destroy Rapine and Murder there.
TAM. These are my ministers and come with me.
TIT. Are these thy ministers? what are they call'd?
TAM. Rapine and Murder; therefore called so,
'Cause they take vengeance of such kind of men.
TIT. Good Lord, how like the empress' sons they are,
And you the empress! but we worldly men
Have miserable, mad, mistaking eyes.
O sweet Revenge, now do I come to thee;
And, if one arm's embracement will content thee,
I will embrace thee in it by and by. [*Exit above.*
TAM. This closing with him fits his lunacy:
Whate'er I forge to feed his brain-sick fits,
Do you uphold and maintain in your speeches,
For now he firmly takes me for Revenge;
And, being credulous in this mad thought,
I'll make him send for Lucius his son;
And, whilst I at a banquet hold him sure,

---

the First Folio *Eptons*. The Second Folio made the needful correction. Hyperion here, as elsewhere in Shakespeare, is loosely used as the sun-god, and is, from the classical point of view, wrongly accented. In the Greek and Latin word the stress is laid on the penultimate syllable. Cf. *Hen. V*, IV, i, 271: "Doth rise and help Hyperion to his horse."

59 *Rapine*] here used for "rape"; see line 45, *supra*. The usage is not very common.

69 (stage direction) *Exit above*] Thus the Cambridge edition, following Rowe; cf. *supra*, line 8, and I, i, 1 (stage direction).

70 *closing with*] coming to terms with, humouring.

71 *fits*] Thus all the editions save the First Quarto, which reads *humours*.

I'll find some cunning practice out of hand,
To scatter and disperse the giddy Goths,
Or at the least make them his enemies.
See, here he comes, and I must ply my theme.

*Enter* TITUS, *below*

TIT. Long have I been forlorn, and all for thee:
Welcome, dread Fury, to my woful house:
Rapine and Murder, you are welcome too:
How like the empress and her sons you are!
Well are you fitted, had you but a Moor:
Could not all hell afford you such a devil?
For well I wot the empress never wags
But in her company there is a Moor;
And, would you represent our queen aright,
It were convenient you had such a devil:
But welcome, as you are. What shall we do?

TAM. What wouldst thou have us do, Andronicus?

DEM. Show me a murderer, I'll deal with him.

CHI. Show me a villain that hath done a rape,
And I am sent to be revenged on him.

TAM. Show me a thousand that have done thee wrong,
And I will be revenged on them all.

TIT. Look round about the wicked streets of Rome,
And when thou find'st a man that's like thyself,
Good Murder, stab him; he's a murderer.

77 *practice out of hand*] stratagem at once.

80 (stage direction) *Enter Titus below*] Thus Collier. Titus has descended from the balcony from which he has been speaking in the earlier part of this scene: see *supra*, lines 8 and 69.

81 TIT. *Long have*] Pope here makes a new scenic division (Scene iv).

Go thou with him, and when it is thy hap
To find another that is like to thee,
Good Rapine, stab him; he's a ravisher.
Go thou with them; and in the emperor's court
There is a queen, attended by a Moor;
Well mayst thou know her by thine own proportion,
For up and down she doth resemble thee:
I pray thee, do on them some violent death;
They have been violent to me and mine.
TAM. Well hast thou lesson'd us; this shall we do.
But would it please thee, good Andronicus,
To send for Lucius, thy thrice valiant son,
Who leads towards Rome a band of warlike Goths,
And bid him come and banquet at thy house;
When he is here, even at thy solemn feast,
I will bring in the empress and her sons,
The emperor himself, and all thy foes;
And at thy mercy shall they stoop and kneel,
And on them shalt thou ease thy angry heart.
What says Andronicus to this device?
TIT. Marcus, my brother! 't is sad Titus calls.

*Enter* MARCUS

Go, gentle Marcus, to thy nephew Lucius;
Thou shalt inquire him out among the Goths:
Bid him repair to me and bring with him
Some of the chiefest princes of the Goths:
Bid him encamp his soldiers where they are:
Tell him the emperor and the empress too

106 *mayst*] Thus all the editions save the First Quarto, which reads *shalt.*
107 *up and down*] altogether.

Feast at my house, and he shall feast with them.
This do thou for my love, and so let him,
As he regards his aged father's life.
MARC. This will I do, and soon return again. [*Exit.*
TAM. Now will I hence about thy business,
And take my ministers along with me.
TIT. Nay, nay, let Rape and Murder stay with me;
Or else I'll call my brother back again,
And cleave to no revenge but Lucius.
TAM. [*Aside to her sons*] What say you, boys? will you bide with him,
Whiles I go tell my lord the emperor
How I have govern'd our determined jest?
Yield to his humour, smooth and speak him fair,
And tarry with him till I turn again.
TIT. [*Aside*] I know them all, though they suppose me mad;
And will o'er-reach them in their own devices:
A pair of cursed hell-hounds and their dam.
DEM. Madam, depart at pleasure; leave us here.
TAM. Farewell, Andronicus: Revenge now goes
To lay a complot to betray thy foes.
TIT. I know thou dost; and, sweet Revenge, farewell.
[*Exit Tamora.*
CHI. Tell us, old man, how shall we be employ'd?
TIT. Tut, I have work enough for you to do.
Publius, come hither, Caius, and Valentine!

---

139 *govern'd*] managed.
140 *smooth*] flatter, cajole. Cf. IV, iv, 96, *supra*.

*Enter* PUBLIUS *and others*

PUB. What is your will?
TIT. Know you these two?
PUB. The empress' sons, I take them, Chiron and Demetrius.
TIT. Fie, Publius, fie! thou art too much deceived;
The one is Murder, Rape is the other's name;
And therefore bind them, gentle Publius:
Caius and Valentine, lay hands on them:
Oft have you heard me wish for such an hour,
And now I find it; therefore bind them sure;
And stop their mouths, if they begin to cry. [*Exit.*

[*Publius, &c. lay hold on Chiron and Demetrius.*

CHI. Villains, forbear! we are the empress' sons.
PUB. And therefore do we what we are commanded.
Stop close their mouths, let them not speak a word.
Is he sure bound? look that you bind them fast.

*Re-enter* TITUS, *with* LAVINIA; *he bearing a knife, and she a basin*

TIT. Come, come, Lavinia; look, thy foes are bound.
Sirs, stop their mouths, let them not speak to me;
But let them hear what fearful words I utter.
O villains, Chiron and Demetrius!
Here stands the spring whom you have stain'd with mud,
This goodly summer with your winter mix'd.
You kill'd her husband, and for that vile fault

167 TIT. *Come, come*] Pope here makes a new scenic division (Scene v).

Two of her brothers were condemn'd to death,
My hand cut off and made a merry jest;
Both her sweet hands, her tongue, and that more dear
Than hands or tongue, her spotless chastity,
Inhuman traitors, you constrain'd and forced.
What would you say, if I should let you speak?
Villains, for shame you could not beg for grace.
Hark, wretches! how I mean to martyr you.
This one hand yet is left to cut your throats,
Whilst that Lavinia 'tween her stumps doth hold
The basin that receives your guilty blood.
You know your mother means to feast with me,
And calls herself Revenge, and thinks me mad:
Hark, villains! I will grind your bones to dust,
And with your blood and it I'll make a paste;
And of the paste a coffin I will rear,
And make two pasties of your shameful heads;
And bid that strumpet, your unhallow'd dam,
Like to the earth, swallow her own increase.
This is the feast that I have bid her to,
And this the banquet she shall surfeit on;
For worse than Philomel you used my daughter,
And worse than Progne I will be revenged:
And now prepare your throats. Lavinia, come,
[*He cuts their throats.*
Receive the blood: and when that they are dead,
Let me go grind their bones to powder small,

189 *a coffin*] a term technically applied in culinary matters to the raised crust of a pie.

192 *increase*] offspring.

195–196 *Philomel . . . Progne*] For the story, see II, iii, 43, *supra*, and note.

And with this hateful liquor temper it; 200
And in that paste let their vile heads be baked.
Come, come, be every one officious
To make this banquet; which I wish may prove
More stern and bloody than the Centaurs' feast.
So, now bring them in, for I'll play the cook,
And see them ready against their mother comes.
[*Exeunt, bearing the dead bodies.*

## SCENE III — COURT OF TITUS'S HOUSE

*A BANQUET SET OUT*

*Enter* LUCIUS, MARCUS, *and* Goths, *with* AARON, *prisoner*

LUC. Uncle Marcus, since it is my father's mind
That I repair to Rome, I am content.

FIRST GOTH. And ours with thine, befall what fortune will.

LUC. Good uncle, take you in this barbarous Moor,
This ravenous tiger, this accursed devil;
Let him receive no sustenance, fetter him,
Till he be brought unto the empress' face,
For testimony of her foul proceedings:

---

202 *officious*] helpful.

204 *the Centaurs' feast*] Ovid (*Metamorphoses*, xii, 210 *seq.*) tells with much revolting detail the struggle between the Centaurs and the Lapithæ, which took place at the marriage feast of Perithous and Hippodameia, after one of the Centaurs has tried to violate the bride. There is a reference to the battle with the Centaurs in *Mids. N. Dr.*, V, i, 44.

SCENE III] Pope makes no new scenic division here.

3 *ours with thine*] our mind agrees with thine.

And see the ambush of our friends be strong;
I fear the emperor means no good to us.
AAR. Some devil whisper curses in mine ear,
And prompt me, that my tongue may utter forth
The venomous malice of my swelling heart!
LUC. Away, inhuman dog! unhallow'd slave!
Sirs, help our uncle to convey him in,
[*Exeunt Goths, with Aaron. Flourish within.*
The trumpets show the emperor is at hand.

*Enter* SATURNINUS *and* TAMORA, *with* ÆMILIUS, Tribunes, Senators, *and others*

SAT. What, hath the firmament moe suns than one?
LUC. What boots it thee to call thyself a sun?
MARC. Rome's emperor, and nephew, break the parle;
These quarrels must be quietly debated.
The feast is ready, which the careful Titus
Hath ordain'd to an honourable end,
For peace, for love, for league and good to Rome:
Please you, therefore, draw nigh, and take your places.
SAT. Marcus, we will.
[*Hautboys sound. The Company sit down at table.*

---

13 *The venomous . . . heart*] Cf. *1 Hen. VI*, III, i, 26: "From *envious malice* of thy *swelling heart*."

17 SAT. *What, hath*] Pope makes a new scenic division here (Scene vi).

19 *break the parle*] begin the parley (of peace). Cf. *1 Hen. VI*, I, iii, 81: "*break* our minds," and *M. Wives*, III, iv, 22: "*Break* [*i. e.*, open] their talk." Others interpret, with less authority, "break off this angry discussion."

*Enter* TITUS, *like a Cook, placing the meat on the table, and* LAVINIA *with a veil over her face, young* LUCIUS, *and others*

TIT. Welcome, my gracious lord; welcome, dread queen;
Welcome, ye warlike Goths; welcome, Lucius;
And welcome, all: although the cheer be poor,
'T will fill your stomachs; please you eat of it.
SAT. Why art thou thus attired, Andronicus?
TIT. Because I would be sure to have all well,
To entertain your highness and your empress.
TAM. We are beholding to you, good Andronicus.
TIT. An if your highness knew my heart, you were.
My lord the emperor, resolve me this:
Was it well done of rash Virginius
To slay his daughter with his own right hand,
Because she was enforced, stain'd, and deflower'd?
SAT. It was, Andronicus.
TIT. Your reason, mighty lord?
SAT. Because the girl should not survive her shame,
And by her presence still renew his sorrows.
TIT. A reason mighty, strong and effectual,
A pattern, precedent, and lively warrant,
For me, most wretched, to perform the like.

38 *Because she was . . . deflower'd*] The writer seems to be confusing the story of Lucretia with that of Virginia, who was not violated according to the story, but was slain by her father, Virginius, in order to preserve her from the dishonour which the decemvir Appius Claudius threatened.

41 *Because the girl . . . shame*] See note on line 38.

44 *lively warrant*] warrant from real life. Cf. III, i, 105, *supra*: "thy *lively* body."

Die, die, Lavinia, and thy shame with thee,
And with thy shame thy father's sorrow die!
[*Kills Lavinia.*

SAT. What hast thou done, unnatural and unkind?

TIT. Kill'd her, for whom my tears have made me blind.
I am as woful as Virginius was,
And have a thousand times more cause than he
To do this outrage, and it now is done.

SAT. What, was she ravish'd? tell who did the deed.

TIT. Will't please you eat? will't please your highness feed?

TAM. Why hast thou slain thine only daughter thus?

TIT. Not I; 't was Chiron and Demetrius:
They ravish'd her, and cut away her tongue;
And they, 't was they, that did her all this wrong.

SAT. Go fetch them hither to us presently.

TIT. Why, there they are both, baked in that pie;
Whereof their mother daintily hath fed,
Eating the flesh that she herself hath bred.
'T is true, 't is true; witness my knife's sharp point.
[*Kills Tamora.*

SAT. Die, frantic wretch, for this accursed deed!
[*Kills Titus.*

LUC. Can the son's eye behold his father bleed?
There's meed for meed, death for a deadly deed!
[*Kills Saturninus. A great tumult. Lucius, Marcus, and others go up into the balcony.*

---

66 (stage direction) *kills . . . the balcony*] Thus the Cambridge editors. For "the balcony" cf. *supra*, I, i, 1 (stage direction) and note; see also V, ii, 8, 69, and 80, and V, iii, 145, *infra*.

MARC. You sad-faced men, people and sons of Rome,
By uproars sever'd, as a flight of fowl
Scatter'd by winds and high tempestuous gusts,
O, let me teach you how to knit again
This scatter'd corn into one mutual sheaf,
These broken limbs again into one body;
Lest Rome herself be bane unto herself,
And she whom mighty kingdoms court'sy to,
Like a forlorn and desperate castaway,
Do shameful execution on herself.
But if my frosty signs and chaps of age,
Grave witnesses of true experience,
Cannot induce you to attend my words, —
[*To Lucius*] Speak, Rome's dear friend: as erst our ancestor,
When with his solemn tongue he did discourse
To love-sick Dido's sad attending ear
The story of that baleful burning night,
When subtle Greeks surprised King Priam's Troy;
Tell us what Sinon hath bewitch'd our ears,
Or who hath brought the fatal engine in
That gives our Troy, our Rome, the civil wound.

71 *mutual*] common.

73–76 *Lest . . . on herself*] These lines are given in the Quarto to a "Roman Lord" and in the Folios to a "Goth." Capell's rearrangement of the text is followed here. *Lest* is Capell's correction of the original reading *Let*.

77 *chaps*] furrows.

80 *our ancestor*] Æneas. Cf. Virgil's *Æneid*, ii, *passim*. See also II, iii, 22, *supra*, and Marlowe and Nashe's tragedy of *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, II, i, 121 *seq*.

86 *the fatal engine*] the Trojan horse.

My heart is not compact of flint nor steel;
Nor can I utter all our bitter grief,
But floods of tears will drown my oratory,
And break my utterance, even in the time
When it should move you to attend me most,
Lending your kind commiseration.
Here is a captain, let him tell the tale;
Your hearts will throb and weep to hear him speak.
LUC. Then, noble auditory, be it known to you,
That cursed Chiron and Demetrius
Were they that murdered our emperor's brother;
And they it were that ravished our sister:
For their fell faults our brothers were beheaded,
Our father's tears despised, and basely cozen'd
Of that true hand that fought Rome's quarrel out,
And sent her enemies unto the grave.
Lastly, myself unkindly banished,
The gates shut on me, and turn'd weeping out,
To beg relief among Rome's enemies;
Who drown'd their enmity in my true tears,
And oped their arms to embrace me as a friend.
I am the turned forth, be it known to you,

93 *Lending your kind*] Thus the Second Quarto and all later editions. The First Quarto (1594) reads *And force you to.*

94 *Here is a captain*] Thus all the editions save the First Quarto, which reads *Her's Romes young captaine.*

95 *Your hearts will throb*] Thus all the editions save the First Quarto, which reads *While I stand by.*

96 *noble*] Thus all the editions save the First Quarto, which reads *gratious.*

97 *Demetrius*] Thus all the editions save the First Quarto, which reads *the damn'd Demetrius.*

109 *the turned forth*] the castaway.

That have preserved her welfare in my blood,
And from her bosom took the enemy's point,
Sheathing the steel in my adventurous body.
Alas, you know I am no vaunter, I;
My scars can witness, dumb although they are,
That my report is just and full of truth.
But, soft! methinks I do digress too much,
Citing my worthless praise: O, pardon me;
For when no friends are by, men praise themselves.

MARC. Now is my turn to speak. Behold the child:

[*Pointing to the Child in the arms of an Attendant.*

Of this was Tamora delivered;
The issue of an irreligious Moor,
Chief architect and plotter of these woes:
The villain is alive in Titus' house,
And as he is, to witness this is true.
Now judge what cause had Titus to revenge
These wrongs, unspeakable, past patience,
Or more than any living man could bear.
Now you have heard the truth, what say you, Romans?
Have we done aught amiss, show us wherein,
And, from the place where you behold us now,
The poor remainder of Andronici
Will, hand in hand, all headlong cast us down,
And on the ragged stones beat forth our brains,

---

124 *And*] Thus the early editions. Theobald substituted *Damn'd.*

130 *now*] Thus the Second Quarto and all later editions. The First Quarto (1594) reads *pleading.*

132 *cast us down*] Thus the Second Quarto and all later editions. The First Quarto (1594) reads *hurle our selues.*

133 *ragged*] rough, rugged.

And make a mutual closure of our house.
Speak, Romans, speak, and if you say we shall,
Lo, hand in hand, Lucius and I will fall.
ÆMIL. Come, come, thou reverend man of Rome,
And bring our emperor gently in thy hand,
Lucius our emperor; for well I know
The common voice do cry it shall be so.
ALL. Lucius, all hail, Rome's royal emperor!
MARC. Go, go into old Titus' sorrowful house,
[*To Attendants.*
And hither hale that misbelieving Moor,
To be adjudged some direful slaughtering death,
As punishment for his most wicked life.
[*Exeunt Attendants.*

LUCIUS, MARCUS, *and the others descend*

ALL. Lucius, all hail, Rome's gracious governor!
LUC. Thanks, gentle Romans: may I govern so,
To heal Rome's harms and wipe away her woe!
But, gentle people, give me aim awhile,

---

134 *closure*] ending.

141 ALL. *Lucius*] The early editions give this speech to Marcus.

145 (stage direction) *Lucius . . . descend*] Thus the Cambridge editors, following Capell. Lucius and the rest leave the balcony for the level of the stage. Cf. *supra*, V, iii, 66 and I, i, 1 (stage direction) and note.

149 *give me aim*] give me scope or guidance, show me consideration. "To give aim" is properly a term in archery, and means to suggest to the shooter the precise direction which his arrow should take. Cf. *K. John*, II, i, 196, "to cry *aim*," and note.

For nature puts me to a heavy task;
Stand all aloof; but, uncle, draw you near,
To shed obsequious tears upon this trunk.
O, take this warm kiss on thy pale cold lips,
[*Kissing Titus.*
These sorrowful drops upon thy blood-stain'd face,
The last true duties of thy noble son!

MARC. Tear for tear and loving kiss for kiss
Thy brother Marcus tenders on thy lips:
O, were the sum of these that I should pay
Countless and infinite, yet would I pay them!

LUC. Come hither, boy; come, come, and learn of us
To melt in showers: thy grandsire loved thee well:
Many a time he danced thee on his knee,
Sung thee asleep, his loving breast thy pillow;
Many a matter hath he told to thee,
Meet and agreeing with thine infancy;

164 *matter*] Thus all editions save the First Quarto, which reads *storie.*

165–169 *Meet and agreeing . . . in grief and woe*] Thus all editions save the First Quarto, which has quite a different reading for these five lines, and transfers the last portion of this speech (lines 167–171) from Lucius to Marcus. The five lines, which have been wholly transformed in the Second Quarto and later editions, ran in the First Quarto thus:

And bid thee beare his prettie tales in minde.
And talke of them when he was dead and gone.
*Marcus.* How manie thousand times hath these poore lips,
When they were living warmd them selues on thine,
Oh now sweete boy, give them their latest kisse,

The First Quarto then continues Marcus's speech with *Bid him farewell,* etc., as in the later texts, which give the whole speech to Lucius.

In that respect then, like a loving child,
Shed yet some small drops from thy tender spring,
Because kind nature doth require it so:
Friends should associate friends in grief and woe:
Bid him farewell; commit him to the grave;
Do him that kindness, and take leave of him.
BOY. O grandsire, grandsire! even with all my heart
Would I were dead, so you did live again!
O Lord, I cannot speak to him for weeping;
My tears will choke me, if I ope my mouth.

*Re-enter* Attendants *with* AARON

A ROMAN. You sad Andronici, have done with woes:
Give sentence on this execrable wretch,
That hath been breeder of these dire events.
LUC. Set him breast-deep in earth, and famish him;
There let him stand and rave and cry for food:
If any one relieves or pities him,
For the offence he dies. This is our doom:
Some stay to see him fasten'd in the earth.
AAR. O, why should wrath be mute, and fury dumb?
I am no baby, I, that with base prayers
I should repent the evils I have done:
Ten thousand worse than ever yet I did
Would I perform, if I might have my will:
If one good deed in all my life I did,
I do repent it from my very soul.

166 *In that respect*] On that account.

176 A ROMAN. *You sad Andronici*] Pope here makes a new scenic division (Scene vii).

LUC. Some loving friends convey the emperor hence,
And give him burial in his father's grave:
My father and Lavinia shall forthwith
Be closed in our household's monument.
As for that heinous tiger, Tamora,
No funeral rite, nor man in mourning weeds,
No mournful bell shall ring her burial;
But throw her forth to beasts and birds of prey:
Her life was beastly and devoid of pity,
And, being so, shall have like want of pity.
See justice done on Aaron, that damn'd Moor,
By whom our heavy haps had their beginning:
Then, afterwards, to order well the state,
That like events may ne'er it ruinate.

[*Exeunt.*

195 *heinous*] Thus all editions save the First Quarto, which reads *rauinous*. Collier, who had no access to a copy of the First Quarto, by a curious coincidence suggested *ravenous*.

200 *And, being so . . . pity*] Thus all editions save the First Quarto, which reads *And being dead let birds on her take pittie.*

203 *Then . . . state*] Then will we apply ourselves to set the state in order.

204 *ruinate*] ruin. The word is somewhat frequent in Shakespeare's early work. Cf. *Lucrece*, 944, "To *ruinate* proud buildings"; and *Sonnet*, X, 7: "Seeking that beauteous roof to *ruinate;*" and *3 Hen. VI*, V, i, 83: "I will not *ruinate* my father's house."

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